

DONALD GRANT'S DEVELOPMENT



J. MACDONALD OXLEY

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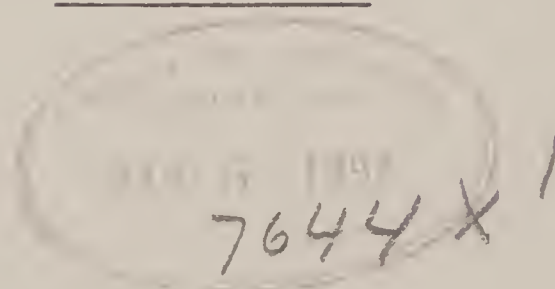
Donald Grant.

DONALD GRANT'S DEVELOPMENT.

BY

J. MACDONALD OXLEY,

Author of "Bert Lloyd's Boyhood," "Up Among the Ice Floes," etc.



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DONALD GRANT'S DEVELOPMENT.

CHAPTER I.

THE HOME AT RIVERVALE.

SOME six miles inland from where the lower North River mingles its sweet brown flood with the salt blue tides of Bayview Harbor, in the Province of Acadia, two roads meet upon the western bank, and combining into one are carried by a long, gray wooden bridge across the placid stream and fertile interval to the farther side, where the way continues on up the rounded slope of the hill until it vanishes in the woods that crest the summit.

Just at the junction of the roads and commanding the parting ways, stands the settlement bearing the name, as appropriate as it is attractive, of Rivervale. It is not a large settlement. A general store, a carriage-maker's shop, and a forge, with their attendant homes, barns, and outbuildings, constitute its centre, while scattered along the roads leading to it, at wide intervals, are the farm-houses, each in the midst of its own grounds, yet in a certain sense connected with the others. There are few more charming landscapes to be found in the Acadian province than the vicinage of Rivervale presents, and certainly

none of the houses in the settlement had a more delightful situation than that occupied by the dwelling of Grant, the carpenter, so designated in order to distinguish him from his neighbor, Grant, the blacksmith, of whom we shall speak more presently.

It was a white cottage built against the slope of the river bank in such a way that, whereas on the water side it looked quite imposing with its two full stories and a half, on the land side it showed a story less. The front door faced the road, and as is the case in so many rural homes, was rarely ever opened. The back door opened upon a rather unkempt little garden leading down to the interval through which the river glided silently on to the sea. Across the interval and above the river, the bridge stretched its gaunt length, its trusses and abutments full of fascination for the boys, who seemed never to weary of climbing about them as agile and fearless as monkeys in their native forest, or diving from their lower courses into the dark brown pools slumbering at the abutments' feet, or of enacting the perilous part of Blondin, as they walked with cautious feet along the hand-rail, or even essayed the topmost stringer when their reckless mood was at its height.

Throughout the length of the North River valley the soil is fertile and quick to give good returns to those who cultivate it diligently, so that there always has been much comfort among the residents, even if little actual wealth. The various farmhouses, each surrounded by its dark green grove of apple and pear trees, are well built and

roomy, as indeed they have need to be ; for there are few of them that do not shelter a whole tribe of boys and girls.

This was as much the case twenty years ago as it is to-day, and the white cottage of Grant, the carpenter, had no reason to be ashamed, for it held its due share of young people. There were seven of them in all, six boys, with capacities for consuming food and wearing out clothes, and one girl, the baby and pet of the family. This large family often filled their father with keen concern, for his business did not bring him very large returns.

Hugh, the eldest son, was the father's boy in form and features ; tall and thin, with black hair, sallow skin, and a gentle, almost shrinking, manner, although there gleamed in his eye when much provoked a fierce flash that betokened there was a limit to his patience which it might not be safe to overstep. Quite as a matter of course, as soon as he learned all that the little school at the cross-roads could teach him, he took his place beside his father in the shop. Attentive, careful, steadfast, he soon became a valuable assistant, although, as so often happens with the quiet, unobtrusive kind, he was not appreciated at home as fully as he deserved.

Donald came next, and in him was a remarkable blending of the characters of both his parents. Like his father, his hair and eyes were black ; but like his mother's, the former was crisp and curly, and the latter expressive of determination and high spirit ; for Mrs.

Grant was a proud, ambitious woman, whose hope in life, so far as material advancement went, had been far from realized, and who now sought to comfort herself by the expectation that among her flock of boys there was one, at least, who would win the prize her husband had somehow missed.

Of the six, Donald seemed in her eyes to promise the best, and if she permitted herself to have a favorite it was he. In height he stood only half an inch less than Hugh, but his figure, instead of being thin, was well filled out and pleasantly symmetrical. His complexion was a light olive with warm patches of color in his cheeks, and his features, although not strictly regular, harmonized enough to entitle him to be considered a good-looking boy.

In his mental make-up there was the same combination of father and mother. Abounding in spirit and energy, brave almost to the verge of recklessness, he nevertheless had a good spice of his father's caution, and generally had the good sense to know when to retire from a false position. All his mother's ambition had descended to him. With each year of growth his horizon widened, until by the time he was fifteen, his outlook went far beyond the bounds of Rivervale. The plane, the sledgehammer and the scythe were alike distasteful to him. He would be a worker with his head rather than with his hands, and would keep himself ever ready for the opportunity which his mother, who sympathized in all his aspirations, assured him would infallibly come.

After Donald was Charlie, a blue-eyed, golden-haired,

rosy-cheeked chap, the handsomest, merriest member of the family. A romping, reckless, impulsive character was Charlie; a leader in every form of mischief, and able, in some mysterious way, to influence the self-contained Hugh more than any of the others. He and Donald were particular friends. Their very difference of disposition seemed to draw them closer together, and they were well-nigh inseparable.

The desire of Charlie's heart was to go to sea, but in this he had the sympathy of neither parent. His father wished him to learn blacksmithing. His mother was not particular whether he learned that or farming, so long as he did not leave Rivervale; for, with a mother's sure intuition, she realized that his nature was one that would render him peculiarly open to the temptations of the world, and in no calling would he be more exposed to such danger than in that of the sea. For the present, the parental influence was strong enough to keep him at home, where he attended school or helped at the forge pretty much as he pleased, his father deeming it wise not to curb him too strictly, lest he should be tempted to run away, as so many boys had done before him.

Next to Charlie came Duncan, a small, soft-voiced, rather sly kind of boy, always on the lookout for number one, who had to stand a good deal of ridicule from his playmates because of certain feminine characteristics that earned for him the nickname of "Sissy."

Then there were the twins—the pride and joy of the household; a pair of plump and lively mischiefs not to

be matched in the whole country. Robert and Harold were the excellent names given them by their parents, which, of course, were promptly cut down to Bob and Harry, and a little later on, under the pretence of their inability to distinguish one from the other, the boys linked the two abbreviations into one, producing a curious compound, "Bobanharry," which they applied indifferently to both, and to which the youngsters never failed to respond.

Last of all came the only daughter, a sturdy, solid bit of a girl, with a sweet, unselfish nature that saved her from being spoiled by the petting she received on all sides. Margaret was her name in full, but Meg was what they all called her, and it suited her far better than the more staid and dignified appellation.

Although, as has been hinted, Mr. Grant could scarcely be called well-to-do, he did manage, by dint of making the most of his little farm, to supplement the earnings of his carriage-making sufficiently to maintain a comfortable home for his large family; and the members of it had, upon the whole, about as happy a time of it as any other family in Rivervale. Both Mr. and Mrs. Grant held very sensible views as to the management of their children. They were firm, without being unduly strict. They respected the individuality of each child, and did not look for a mechanical uniformity. They did not demand from frolicking, thoughtless Charlie the same painstaking fulfillment of directions that they never failed to receive from sure and steadfast Hugh.

"They are very different from each other, Ellen," said Mr. Grant to his wife, as they were talking together one evening after the young people had settled down for the night. "And I am better pleased that it is so than if they were all alike. They each have their own good points, haven't they?"

"Indeed they have, Alec," was Mrs. Grant's reply, her countenance beaming with mingled love and pride as she mentally reviewed her darlings' various characteristics, and found abundant good in each. "At the same time I am very glad that Hugh is the eldest, for he will be a great help to you as he grows up to manhood, and can take some of your work off your shoulders. For indeed, Alec dear, I am afraid you do have to work too hard, with so many mouths to feed and so many backs to clothe. You are getting to have a worn look that I don't like at all."

"Oh, I'm right enough!" answered Mr. Grant, with a reassuring smile. "I do happen to feel a bit tired to-night, but that is all."

With a half-suppressed sigh, Mrs. Grant rose and began to set the room in order, for the boys never failed to disarrange it most completely before betaking themselves to bed. The fact of the matter was, she felt a good deal of concern about her husband. Although he himself would not admit it, he undoubtedly was losing some of the vigor and strength that had distinguished him. The end of the day's work always found him very weary, and glad to rest quietly at home, whereas not long before he had been

fond of dropping in upon his neighbors for a social chat, or of having a game of quoits in the open space in front of his shop.

But like a wise woman who had faith in an overruling Providence, no less all-merciful than all-powerful, she did not suffer these anxious thoughts to weigh too heavily upon her heart. In many ways her lot was full of blessing. For instance, while the decorum of Grant the blacksmith's orderly household had never been broken in upon by the happy sound of childish voices, the olive branches were many about her table. Again, death had visited other homes and taken away children as dearly loved as her own, while her family circle was unbroken.

Then, even above these blessings did her soul take comfort in the bright promise she read in her boys; for she and her husband had striven to bring them up in the fear and admonition of the Lord, and so far, at least, their care and prayers seemed not to be in vain.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Grant were rigidly religious. They did not, like Squire Stewart, make the Sabbath a day to be dreaded by the children because of its dreary solemnity and preternatural dullness. They could not help the church services being sadly lacking in interest to young minds, for good old Dr. Sternhold never dreamed of adapting his discourses, which were as lengthy as they were erudite and prosy, to comprehensions much below that of the squire himself, who sat with rigid dignity in his big pew, nodding approval to each point from firstly to fourteenthly.

To all the boys except Hugh those Sunday services seemed to be a species of purgatory. His gentle, patient spirit enabled him to endure them with scarce a wriggle, causing the preacher to form a very high opinion of him, and when he had opportunity, to pat him approvingly on the head and say, with a meaning glance at any of the others who happened to be within hearing: "You have a very good boy here, Mrs. Grant. He seems to lose not a word of my discourse. It would be well if the rest of the boys in the congregation would imitate his most commendable example."

Could Dr. Sternhold have seen into Hugh's mind, he would have read there an unspoken protest against what he felt to be undeserved praise; for, in reality, the sermons were to him little better than an unintelligible combination of words read off from a bulky manuscript, in a dry, harsh voice almost entirely devoid of expression. But he was altogether too reserved and sensitive to undeceive the grand old pastor, who accordingly remained in blissful ignorance.

There was, however, one part of the churchgoing that the boys really did enjoy, and that was the drive in to the village, four miles away, where the church lifted its white spire skyward, and then the drive home again, with purgatory over for another week. How eagerly they helped in catching the horses and harnessing them to the long, three-seated express wagon which was required to carry the whole family; and how earnestly they contended for the privilege of holding the reins while they were passing

through the woods, where the road was so safe that Mr. Grant could, without compunction, hand over the reins to one of the elder boys, who naturally felt it to be a great honor to drive so imposing a team.

Then after they returned with keen appetites for the dinner which would be prepared with all possible expedition by the bustling mother, there would be the long afternoon during which they might do pretty much what they pleased, provided they did not indulge in any of their weekday sports and pastimes.

In the evening all would gather in the best parlor, where Mr. Grant, with his wife's co-operation, would hold a kind of Sunday-school, giving instruction in the catechism and the Bible, which he sought to make as simple and interesting as possible. There was a wonderful difference between his method and that of Dr. Sternhold; for although he could not lay claim to any great degree of education, he had a shrewd, observant, retentive mind that enabled him to profit to the utmost by such scanty advantages as had fallen in his way; and, moreover, he possessed a goodly spice of mother wit, that rendered his conversation, when natural and unconstrained as it of course always was in the bosom of his family, exceedingly interesting. He made the heroes of the Bible as real to his boys as the heroes of English history. To them Moses was no less actual a personage than Alfred the Great; and David shared their heartfelt admiration with the Black Prince.

Such was the home in which Donald Grant's develop-

ment began ; and in order to try and give a clear picture of it, this opening chapter has somewhat overrun the intended course of the story, so that in the succeeding chapters there must be a certain harking back, that everything may be brought into due sequence. As may be seen, there was nothing that could be called notable about his early surroundings. They were, so to speak, eminently commonplace. Yet he showed himself in later years to be a young man quite out of the ordinary ; otherwise, indeed, there would be no justification for this record. Therefore—— But let the story explain itself as it progresses.

CHAPTER II.

THE CROSSROADS SCHOOL.

THE facilities for acquiring an education at Rivervale were, to say the least, very meagre. The bulk of the population in the neighborhood was made up of Scotch Roman Catholics, hard-headed, narrow-minded folk, who, so long as their sons were proficient in the use of the plough and pitchfork, and their daughters skillful in the production of good butter and strong yarn, took little thought for intellectual attainments, and were quite content to do without teaching in any form.

Of the few Protestants, Squire Stewart was of course the most prominent ; a fine-looking old man, who had, beneath a stern demeanor and a hard voice, as kind and generous a heart as there was in the county. His long residence at Rivervale, his commanding ways, and his wealth had made him a sort of autocrat. He owned the general store, and nearly everybody within a radius of three miles was "on his books." He held a clear title to thousands of acres of the best land within sight, while his mortgages encumbered the titles of a score of the farmers round about, who sometimes found it no easy matter to satisfy the squire and the needs of their families at the same time.

He was a Presbyterian of the strictest Old Kirk School,

having scanty charity for those who did not belong to his particular section of the divine sheepfold. The one thing that prevented an intimacy existing between him and Grant, the carpenter, that would have been of much benefit to both—for they sincerely admired each other's good qualities—was the fact of the latter being a Baptist. The squire never could bring himself to forbear doctrinal discussion when they had opportunity for conversation together, and however admirably Mr. Grant might keep both tongue and temper under control, the quiet yet steadfast firmness with which he adhered to his own views seemed to enrage the testy old gentleman about as much as if he had roared back at him in his own style; and the consequence was, no matter how gently the discussion might begin, it almost always ended in a volcanic explosion.

While the squire's children were growing up, there had been a schoolhouse in a charming nook on the other side of the river, for which he had made it his business to see that there was always a good teacher provided, usually paying the bulk of the salary out of his own pocket. But after his sons and daughters had grown up and gone away, all save one daughter who would not leave him in his loneliness,—the mother having been for many years in the enjoyment of the reward of a saintly life,—the squire lost all interest in the school, and after a fitful existence it had flickered out altogether. Consequently, when the Grant boys began to approach the age of going to school, there was no school to which they could go.

In this emergency Mr. Grant went to the squire and laid the case before him. Here surely was a state of affairs that ought to enlist his interest and influence. The squire listened in grim silence to the carpenter's earnest presentation of the case, and, when he had finished, giving him a shrewd, sharp glance through his gold-rimmed spectacles, asked in his direct tone:

"And what kind of a teacher would you like to have, Neighbor Grant?"

"As good as could be got, squire," was the reply. "We can't, of course, pay much of a salary, so I suppose we must not put our expectations too high."

"No, indeed, nor keep the school open all the year. We can have teaching only through the summer, anyway; but that is not what I want. I was thinking that, as it would be mainly for the benefit of your boys that the teacher would be engaged, you would not be satisfied unless he was a Baptist, like yourself—eh? And let me tell you, I will never raise my little finger to get a teacher on those conditions." And having thus delivered himself, the old man settled back sternly in his chair, his whole expression saying, "That's my ultimatum; now make the best of it."

But Mr. Grant seemed in nowise disconcerted by this bombshell. Smiling in his pleasantest manner, he leaned toward the squire, as he hastened to respond: "My dear squire, I am afraid you think me to be a much more narrow-minded person than I really am. I can assure you that so long as the teacher is competent for the work,

and is a decent, respectable fellow, it will matter not the flip of the finger to me whether he be Baptist, Methodist, or Presbyterian. For that matter, I am quite content that the choice of him should rest entirely with you, and then you can satisfy yourself that among other good qualities he holds that particular shade of doctrine which is held by your especial branch of the Presbyterian Church."

There was a sly twinkle of humor in Mr. Grant's eye as he said this, because the relations between the different sections of the Presbyterian Church in Acadia had been so acutely strained for years past, that they were much more inclined to hold fellowship with other denominations than with one another.

The squire noted the twinkle, but wisely ignored it, and with much of the sternness gone out of his countenance, said: "Well, if you leave the matter altogether in my hands, I will do my best to help you. We ought to have a trustee board formed at once. You, and Grant, the blacksmith, and Andy Chesholm, across the river, with myself, will be enough. I will see to that."

After some further conversation, Mr. Grant went away much elated at the success of his application; for whatever the squire promised to "see to" was as good as done. His reputation for keeping his word to the uttermost of human power went far beyond the bounds of Rivervale.

The squire did "see to it" with his customary promptitude. The board of trustees as suggested by him was duly constituted, the necessary steps taken for the pro-

vision of a salary, and finally, as a result of inquiry among the students of Chebucto University, situated in the Provincial capital, the services of a second year student were secured for the school at Rivervale.

Some years previous to the school's having been given up, as already explained, the schoolhouse had been moved across the river to a new site at the Crossroads, as the junction of the road coming from Upper North River with that which led ultimately away out to the north shore was always called. Here it was almost in view of Grant the carpenter's cottage, and a bare quarter of a mile away, so that there would be no difficulty about regular attendance, no matter what the weather.

Here Hugh and Donald began their schooling under Angus McLeod, a tall, gaunt, sober-visaged young man, who was duly certified to belong to the strictest school of Old Kirk doctrine, held so high in reverence by the squire.

The two youngsters—for they were but eight and seven years respectively—at first entertained feelings of profound awe toward their teacher. His solemn manner, his deep, harsh voice, and his way of chopping up his sentences, made them think he was in a chronic state of crossness; and they found going to school rather an ordeal until they came to a better understanding of Mr. McLeod, which was brought about in this way:

They were the only Protestant boys in the school, and the only ones whose parents had taken the trouble to teach them the alphabet and the multiplication table. This knowledge naturally gave them a start over their

more ignorant schoolmates, which, combined with a certain innate refinement of manner that they inherited from their father, could not fail to especially enlist their teacher's interest and sympathy. He had too much shrewd sense to make marked favorites of them; but they soon learned that he was more than their teacher, placed over them to lead them through a mechanical round of petty tasks in the rudiments of education; he was a friend, a counsellor, a guide. He liked Hugh's patient plodding, as he admired Donald's restless energy. In the latter he was not slow to see more promise of a genuine student than in the former. Donald was far quicker at apprehension than his elder brother, nor was his grasp less enduring.

"Eh, Donald, laddie," he would say, patting the black curls, and looking with a kind, brotherly expression into the bright, eager eyes, "ye like to think for yourself, don't ye, and to ask questions. I greatly hope you will live to get to Chebucto University; for it is just your kind they like best to have there."

Donald, of course, entirely missed the point of the reference to the university; but he did not miss the big, grave man's winning sympathy, and it had its inspiring, helpful influence upon him, even at that early age.

The school session lasted only for the summer. In the autumn, to Donald's especial grief, Mr. McLeod had to return to his studies.

"Won't you please come back again?" he pleaded, holding desperately on to his hand as he stood at the

roadside waiting for the coach. "Do please come back soon, won't you?"

"I cannot just give you my word on it, Donald, lad-die," replied Mr. McLeod, lifting the earnest little fellow up in his strong arms, "for we are all in the hands of Providence, you know; and then, maybe I won't be asked to come back."

"No fear of that," broke in Mr. Grant, standing at his elbow. "No fear of that. We want no better teacher than you. You're more than welcome to the school for as many summers as you can make it convenient to come to us."

"Well, those are very kind words, Mr. Grant," said Mr. McLeod, a bright smile illuminating his face; "and it is pleasant to bear such away. I have tried to do my best here, although," lowering his voice almost to a whisper, "present company excepted, I have had some heart-breaking material to work on."

Just then the coach rolled into sight. There was a brief stoppage to take up the passenger and to exchange mail bags, for Grant, the blacksmith, had charge of a way post office; and with a crack of the whip and rattle of trace chains, the teacher was carried away, while the big tears chased one another down Donald's plump cheeks.

During the long winter, the mention of Mr. McLeod's name was sufficient to insure Donald's diligent attention to the lessons his mother set him, and with the opening of spring he began to look eagerly for the return of his friend. When a letter came from him stating that he

would resume his teaching immediately after the closing of the university, Donald was as happy as if a fortune had been left him. At last, one afternoon late in April, the coach on its trip out from the village carried a passenger for Rivervale, and this was none other than Angus McLeod returning to his former field of work.

The warmest of country greetings awaited him at the home of Grant, the carpenter, and in a few days the little Crossroads school was running again just as though it had not been asleep for more than six months. He was glad to find that neither Hugh nor Donald had forgotten in the winter what they had learned in the summer, as was the case with the most of their schoolmates. Thanks to parental assistance, they had decidedly gained ground, and Mr. McLeod felt so proud of them that, calling them up to his desk one morning, he put them through a thorough examination to which the whole school was called upon to listen; and then, in a sudden burst of indignation, cried out: "There, boys and girls, doesn't that make you ashamed of yourselves? You might at least have managed to keep in your heads what I taught you last summer, even though you added nothing to it. But now, with most of you, I have to begin all over again."

There was a new pupil from the Grant household this summer, viz: Charlie, rejoicing in six full years. He at once proved himself a most amusing and exasperating scholar. As bright as a button, he was also as merry as a cricket, and seemed to believe that his special mission

was to set his schoolmates to giggling. Had he been older, Mr. McLeod, of course, could have taken stern measures with him and enforced good behavior upon him; but he was as tiny as he was merry, and he had such an innocent, babyish face that it was impossible to deal with him as he deserved. So he was assigned a seat between his two brothers, and they were charged with keeping him in order, which difficult feat they managed to perform fairly well.

It was a curiously constituted little school, as has been already mentioned. All the pupils but the Grant boys came from Roman Catholic families, and the majority of them were far more proficient in the use of Gaelic than of English. Gaelic was the language of the fireside; and although they were all eager to learn English because they knew they would otherwise be at a great disadvantage, still, surrounded as they were by others in precisely the same situation, their progress could not fail to be slow. At the school, their attempts to pronounce the English words and to answer questions in English would have been highly amusing had they not been so pathetic.

Not a suspicion of a smile did Mr. McLeod ever permit to flit over his face as he gravely listened to their uncouth utterances. Their feelings were as sacred to him as his own, and if only they would strive to do their best, he was ever ready to give them all the assistance they could utilize.

Donald made marked progress during this summer. For such a child his application and industry were really

marked, and Mr. McLeod felt more and more confirmed in his opinion that if the little fellow did reach years of maturity, and had anything like an adequate opportunity, he would win a place for himself amongst the foremost in the land.

"I wish I could see twenty years ahead," he said to Donald, "just to see where you will be then. Perhaps you will be on the high road to fame, while I'll be an obscure country clergyman, buried in some out-of-the-way place."

For still a third summer season was Mr. McLeod able to take charge of the Rivervale school. But that had to be the last. His course at the university was completed, he having graduated with very high honors; and he intended taking a further course of study at Edinburgh University. So that under any circumstances, Rivervale would not see him again for several years. Before he left he wrote a long letter to Donald, urging upon him to study just as hard under the new teacher as he had done under him, and promising that if it were at all possible, he would pay Rivervale a visit on his return to Acadia and see how his dear young friends there were getting on.

Donald was greatly delighted at the receipt of this letter. It was written to him just as if he were grown-up, and it was all for him. After it had been read over to him several times, he stowed it away in his most sacred hiding place and, better than that, he heeded its good counsels. Mr. McLeod's seed fell into good ground, as in due time he was to have the satisfaction of seeing for himself.

CHAPTER III.

TEACHERS AND TEACHERS.

FOR the next six years there was a different teacher each summer at Rivervale, and their qualities varied greatly. They were all students at the university, doing as many did, earning sufficient to carry them through the winter by teaching during the summer; and they had very diverse ways of looking upon their work.

To one it was a disagreeable task undertaken simply for the sake of the dollars it brought, and without any sense of duty toward those who were to be taught; so many lessons a day to be gotten through with, and so long as this was accomplished with any pretence of accuracy, that was enough.

Another was irritable and unreasonable. He had no consideration for the difficulties under which the Gaelic scholars labored, and would even mimic their awkward methods of pronunciation, thus making himself intensely unpopular among them. Donald came into collision with him one day in a manner that left a deep sense of injury upon his heart.

Charlie had been asked a question in the geography class, and had answered correctly enough, but in such an off-hand way that the teacher, who never listened too intently, misunderstood him.

“Wrong!” he snapped out. “Go down to the foot!”

Now Charlie, by some good fortune, had managed to get nearly to the top of the class, and he was very loath to lose his honorable position, especially when this fall was undeserved; so, raising his head, he piped out: “Please, sir, I’m not wrong; I said ‘Maine,’ and that’s the answer given in the book.”

“You did not. You said ‘Spain,’ and you need not think to deceive me in that way,” retorted the teacher, angrily.

With trembling lip and tearful eyes, Charlie was about to leave his place, when Donald, whose seat was in the front row, and who had distinctly heard Charlie answer “Maine,” sprang up, and looking very indignant, cried out: “Charlie did say ‘Maine,’ sir. I was right behind him, and I heard him.”

“You were right behind him, and you prompted him when he made a mistake,” retorted the teacher. Then, turning upon Charlie and raising his ferule, he thundered: “Go down to the foot—do you hear me?—or I’ll make you.”

Charlie slowly dragged himself down, while Donald, in whom an outraged sense of justice overmastered all considerations of fear, burst out in a tone audible all over the school: “That isn’t fair!”

Hardly were the words uttered than the teacher, in a passion of fury, sprang toward him, and seizing him by his coat collar, dragged him roughly to the platform, where he stood him so that he faced the whole school,

now trembling with terror and excitement. Then grasping the ferule, and holding it ready to strike, he roared out in a voice that shook with rage: "Take that back, you rascal, and beg my pardon before the school, or I'll thrash you within an inch of your life."

Now, there was not a boy in the school who had the courage of his convictions to the same degree as Donald Grant; and in this case not only was he absolutely confident of being in the right, but there was added thereto a burning sense of the injustice of the teacher's action, which roused in him the very highest spirit of resistance. He was only twelve years old, and he looked very helpless in the hands of the wrathful teacher, but not a word came from between his close-shut lips.

"Will you take it back?" shouted the teacher. "I'll give you one more chance."

Donald shook his head. He could not open his mouth.

"Then—take that!" and the long, black ferule descended with cruel force upon the boy, sending a shock of agony through his whole body, and evoking a kind of gasp of horror from the scholars looking on with distended eyes and bated breath.

Donald shrank under the blow, and his face grew white as marble. Raising the ferule on high, the teacher asked again: "Will you take back what you said, and beg my pardon?"

Donald's colorless lips murmured an inaudible "No," and, reading his silence aright, the brutal teacher struck him again. Six times did he strike the unresisting but un-

conquerable boy, and then, his fury having been spent sufficiently to allow a qualm of better judgment to make itself felt, he threw Donald from him, saying: "There now! you won't forget that lesson in a hurry. Go back to your seat."

Instead of going back to his seat, Donald, whose eyes still showed no signs of tears, went straight down the passage-way to the door, and out into the sunlight. Near by the school was a hazel thicket. To this he made his way, and pushing into the heart of it, threw himself down upon a little knoll. Then the pent-up tears were given vent, and in sobs that shook his young frame as the gale rocks the willows, he sought relief for the mingled suffering of body and mind.

It was the first time he had been punished, and although his conscience was pure of wrong, yet there was the disgrace, the horrid, though undeserved, disgrace, of being beaten like a dog before all his schoolmates. To his proud, sensitive nature this seemed even worse than the actual bodily pain, excruciating as that was. Oh, if Mr. McLeod could only have been there to have taken his part! For he was right—Charlie had answered "Maine," not "Spain," and for him (Donald) to have stated anything else would have been nothing short of falsehood.

When he left the school, the teacher, who now began to wish he had not been so passionate and to feel somewhat apprehensive about the consequences, made no attempt to recall him, but said, with an uneasy laugh: "A

good riddance, indeed ! The fewer we have of that sort in this school the better."

But he was not to be permitted to dismiss the subject so easily as that. When the matter came to Mr. Grant's ears, he was exceedingly indignant—as well he might be—if for no other cause than the cruel marks his boy bore upon him. He reported it to the squire, and the trustees at once instituted an investigation, at which the testimony of the other scholars was so overwhelmingly corroborative of the statements of Donald and Charlie, that when the inquiry was concluded, Squire Stewart, turning to the teacher, said in a tone of unmistakable severity: "Now, sir, after what we have heard, there remains but one course open to us, namely, to request from you precisely what you sought to force from Donald; that is, a taking back of your unjustifiable language, and an apology to him for the most undeserved punishment you inflicted."

The foolish young fellow, although now fully convinced of his error, stiffly refused to do either.

"Then, sir," replied the squire, in a still severer tone, "you may regard your engagement here as cancelled."

The same afternoon the teacher, doing his best to maintain an expression of indignant innocence, went away in the coach; and, as the summer was almost over, the trustees thought it best to close the school for the season.

The teacher next year was unlike any of his predecessors. His idea of life seemed to be to get through it

with as little trouble as possible. Fat and jovial, always ready for a laugh, and apparently never out of temper, he presented a striking contrast to the teacher who had treated Donald so brutally. Had the scholars respected him as much as they liked him, the school would, so to speak, have cared for itself; but they stood in no awe of him whatever. Consequently the lessons were, for the most part, shamefully neglected. But this did not seem to trouble him in the least. So long as the lessons were scrambled through in some sort of fashion, he was content.

Yet even his indifference did not chill Donald's ardor. It puzzled him a good deal, and he felt very sure that the teacher was not faithfully discharging his duty. But he kept right on with his studies notwithstanding; for he had begun to look forward to the county academy, and was determined to lose no time in getting ready for it.

The following year there came to Rivervale a teacher more like Mr. McLeod in spirit than any of the others. He was utterly unlike Mr. McLeod in appearance, for he was small in stature, slight in build, and delicate of feature. Indeed, he seemed so gentle and almost fragile, that Squire Stewart wondered if he would answer the purpose. There were a good many big boys at the school now, rough, noisy young fellows, not unkind of heart, but fond of horseplay; and the new teacher might find the task of keeping them in order beyond his powers. He said something of the kind to him, but Earnest Munroe seemed not a whit daunted.

"I think I will be able to manage them all right, Mr. Stewart," he answered, smiling defferentially. "I have had some previous experience in teaching, you know, and, after all, boys are pretty much alike wherever you find them."

There was something in both his tone and expression as he said this that completely dispelled the squire's doubts.

"He will keep them in order, never fear," he remarked to Mr. Grant afterward.

"There is something in his eye, I cannot say just what it is, that shows he's not to be made game of."

The squire was right as usual in his judgment of people. When the big boys saw the new teacher first, they said to themselves that they would have things pretty much their own way under his rule; but they soon learned their mistake. Without once making use of the ferule or, indeed, inflicting punishment in any form, Mr. Munroe established himself in complete command of the situation. His gentle, yet firm, voice never failed to meet with respectful heed, and under his faithful teaching the scholars even began to make up the leeway of the previous summer.

Donald was at once strongly attracted to Mr. Munroe, and as soon as the latter came to know the boy, the liking was mutual. Never since Mr. McLeod had there been a teacher with so much sympathy for the scholars' difficulties, with so wise a way of giving assistance, and yet letting the pupil do as much as possible himself.

Full of ambition as he was to enter the academy that autumn, Donald devoted himself to his studies with tireless energy. He positively preferred them to his play, and his health might have suffered had not Mr. Munroe chosen him as his companion in the long walks he loved to take in the golden afternoons. At such times, putting away all talk about the work of the school, he held Donald enchanted while he discoursed upon the wonders and beauties of nature, or the achievements of science, or the triumphs of literature. His brain was a perfect storehouse of things worth knowing. He had some knowledge of botany and geology, and though he was only twenty, had read and digested an amazing number of books. He could quote passages of the finest poetry in the English language; and, best of all, so far as Donald was immediately concerned, he took keen delight in pouring out all the treasures he had acquired for the benefit of an appreciative and receptive mind.

No wonder that Donald fairly worshiped him. He was his intellectual hero, and there was nothing he could have asked within his power to do that Donald would have refused him. As it chanced, Donald had an opportunity of rendering him signal service ere the summer passed. At his earnest solicitation, Mrs. Grant had asked Mr. Munroe to their cottage, where indeed he would be much more comfortable than boarding among Roman Catholics as he was. The teacher had gladly accepted, and his gentle, genial presence had proved a very welcome addition to the family circle. It was

noticed that sometimes he seemed very tired after his long walks, and the keen, motherly eye of Mrs. Grant was often turned upon him with a good deal of concern; but if anything was said he always turned it off lightly.

One Saturday afternoon in early autumn, he and Donald took an unusually long walk far away over the hills into the "back lands," as they were called, where some flowers were to be found that did not grow elsewhere in the neighborhood. Mr. Munroe's stay was drawing to a close, and he was anxious to make the most of the time still at his disposal. The flowers were found, and some fine specimens duly put into press. It was dark before the two returned, and they were both evidently tired out. Immediately after supper Mr. Munroe went to his room, saying he thought he would tumble into bed and have a good rest.

It was shortly before midnight when Donald, sunk in the deep, dreamless sleep of an overwearied boy, was roused by his father, who stood at his bedside holding a light in one hand and shaking him with the other.

"Wake up, Donald!" he called. "Wake up, my boy, and get into your clothes as quick as you can."

With a tremendous effort, Donald burst the bonds of sleep, and then his father told him that Mr. Munroe was very, very ill; so ill that the doctor must be gotten for him at once, and he, Donald, would have to go into the village and get him.

Donald was wide enough awake now.

"Is he so ill?" he cried, impulsively. "Can't I go in and see him?"

"No, Donald," said his father, "your mother is with him, and there's not a minute to be lost. As soon as you are dressed, go out and saddle Nelson. When you are ready, I'll give you a note for the doctor."

Longing for at least one look at his beloved teacher, but knowing full well that his father would not hurry him off without it unless the emergency was very serious, Donald scrambled into his clothes, lit the lantern, hastened to the barn, put the saddle and bridle on Nelson, the big black horse, and as he led him up to the door his father appeared holding the note.

"Now, Donald dear, ride as fast as you dare. Every minute is precious. It is a dark night, but both you and Nelson know the road by heart. Good-bye. God bless you and keep you safe."

There was a clatter of hoofs upon the stony road, followed by the repeated thunder of their strokes upon the resounding timber of the bridge, and Donald was off, with four miles of hard riding between him and the doctor's residence. The night was dark as pitch, the light of the stars having been blotted out by clouds covering the face of the sky, and he wisely made no attempt to guide the sagacious animal that bore him. He simply kept the reins well in hand in case of a stumble, and let Nelson do the rest.

On up the hill he dashed at a rapid canter, past farmhouses whose only sign of life was the barking of

watch dogs at the sound of the hoof-beats; past herds of cattle rising like spectres out of the fields at his sudden and startling approach; through dense patches of wood where the road seemed like a long tunnel; and over corduroy bridges that rattled out their amazement at being disturbed in the middle of the night when all honest folks should be abed.

That midnight ride was a sharp test of the boy's nerve; and who can blame him if his heart rose to his mouth at times, and he prayed for it to be over? At length the eagerly looked-for sound of Nelson's hoofs upon a plank bridge told him that he had reached the outskirts of the village, and a few minutes later he had reined up his panting steed before the doctor's door and was plying the knocker with trembling fingers.

"If the doctor should be away," he thought with a gasp of sharp anxiety, as he waited for reply. "He often is away all night. I've heard him say so to mother."

CHAPTER IV.

THE VILLAGE ACADEMY.

AFTER what seemed to Donald, in his agony of anxious impatience, an inexcusably long interval, the window of the doctor's bedroom was thrown up, and his night-capped head appeared, to inquire in a somewhat gruff tone:

"Who are you? and what do you want?"

"I'm Grant the carpenter's son Donald," was the prompt reply; "and have a note from father. You are wanted at once."

"Very well, I will be down directly," answered the doctor, closing the window.

In a few minutes he opened the door, drew Donald in, and read the note. As soon as he did so his face grew very serious.

"I am indeed wanted at once. There is not a moment to lose." And he began bustling about his surgery, getting his things together.

"Have you a wagon?" he asked.

On Donald answering in the negative, he lit a lantern, and hurrying to the barn, saddled and bridled one of his horses with the quickness of a practiced hand.

"Now then, my lad," he cried, springing into the saddle, "follow me as best you can." And with an en-

couraging chirp to the fine bay mare that carried him, he dashed out into the road and headed for Rivervale.

Had old Nelson been perfectly fresh, he might have held his own with the other horse, but he was blown and tired from the four miles' gallop in the dark, and soon fell behind, until Donald could not even hear the sound of the mare's hoofs striking the hard, dry road.

"Please, dear God, let the doctor be in time," he prayed with fervent simplicity.

When he reached Rivervale, he sprang off Nelson, leaving the horse to look out for himself, and rushed into the house. The first one he met was his mother, just coming away from Mr. Munroe's room, and he panted out through trembling lips :

"Was the doctor in time, mother?"

"Thank God, yes," answered Mrs. Grant, bending down to kiss his flushed forehead. "And you deserve all the credit for it, my brave boy. Go and lie down now. You must be tired out. You will be able to see Mr. Munroe in the morning."

The good news and his mother's praise produced a reaction altogether beyond Donald's control. He could say nothing, but hurrying off to his room, flung himself upon his bed and burst into tears. A few minutes later he was sound asleep.

In the morning he was allowed to pay his beloved teacher a short visit. He found him extremely pale and weak, but as serene as ever.

"God bless you, Donald," he said, softly, holding out

his thin, white hand to clasp the boy's stout, ruddy fist; "you did me a service last night I can never repay. But I will never forget it, Donald, and perhaps the chance may come for me to prove my gratitude. If ever I can be of any help to you anywhere, you won't hesitate to let me know, will you, Donald?"

It was a sudden and severe internal hemorrhage, brought on by over-exertion, which had put the teacher's life in danger, and Dr. Henderson said that had he reached him an hour later he could not have done him any good.

There was no more school at Rivervale that season; but while Mr. Munroe grew steadily stronger under Mrs. Grant's motherly care, Donald continued his preparations for the academy, Mr. Munroe acting as a sort of "coach" or tutor; and many delightful hours did they spend together over the first book of Euclid, the first part of Cæsar's Commentaries, and the other studies that would be taken up at the academy. Indeed, under his teacher's inspiring influence, Donald went beyond what was actually required for admittance to the academy.

"Just so much to the good," Mr. Munroe would say, with one of his winning smiles. "The better prepared you are at the start, the easier you will find the work all through your course."

The academy opened in the latter part of September, and although Mr. Munroe had sufficiently recovered his strength before then to be able to return home, he wanted to see how Donald acquitted himself. The purpose of the preliminary examination was twofold: first, to ascer-

tain whether the pupil was qualified to enter the academy; second, to determine to what rank or form he should be assigned.

It was held in the head master's room. Together with a number of other boys, Donald presented himself one Wednesday morning, decked out in his bravest attire which was simple enough, and feeling as nervous and downcast as though he were going to his own execution. He knew the head master, Mr. Patterson, well enough by sight, but had never met him in his official capacity before; and he seemed to him little short of appalling in his black gown, which he wore only on special occasions, his bright eyes flashing out almost fiercely through gold-rimmed spectacles, and his bushy black beard wagging in an intimidating manner as he talked.

The examination was partly oral, partly written, and the list of subjects embraced the rudiments of Latin, geometry, algebra; and then, of course, the regular English branches, grammar, history, geography, arithmetic. In the oral part Donald, once his tongue got into working order, did very well. He soon got used to Mr. Patterson's sharp way of questioning and answered very satisfactorily. The written part gave him more trouble. He had never tried anything of the kind before, and his nervousness made him at first put down answers in a shaky scrawl that was a caricature of his ordinary handwriting, and that did great injustice to his actual knowledge.

Happily, just when his heart was sinking into despair,

Mr. Munroe entered the room. Ostensibly he had come to say a few words to Mr. Patterson. Perhaps, however, with the subtle instinct of true friendship, he had divined his pupil's probable difficulties. He did not speak to Donald, but he smiled cheeringly, confidently at him, as though to say :

“Do your level best, Donald. Be a credit to me as well as to yourself. You can if you will, you know.”

That smile was Donald's salvation. It banished his nervousness and despondency as the sun puts to flight the morning mist. He returned it heartily, and then applied himself to his work. How different it appeared to him now ! The right answers seemed to be on the paper right beside the questions, and his pen could hardly fly fast enough to copy them out. Without looking to right or left, he scribbled away as for very life's sake, and just as the head master announced : “Four o'clock ! Gather up and hand in your papers, please,” he wrote the last word of his answer to the last question.

It was very evident that all had not made such progress. Some would have liked very much to be allowed another hour. Others, although not by any means content with their performance, were glad to be relieved from further effort. One by one the papers were handed in, and then Mr. Patterson announced that the results would be declared on Friday morning.

Out trooped the boys to compare notes of the answers they had made to the different questions. But Donald did not linger with them. He was impatient to find

Mr. Munroe and tell him how he had succeeded. He soon encountered him on the street, and hastened to tell him what good his cheering smile had done at a critical time. Mr. Munroe was greatly pleased.

"I am sure you have done well, Donald; very well indeed. Perhaps, who knows, you will carry off the free scholarship. That would be grand, wouldn't it?"

Donald's eyes gleamed. It would be grand indeed. Not only because of the honor of the thing, but because it would spare his father all payments for school fees and text-books; and this meant much where dollars were not in plenty.

On Friday morning the two drove into the village to learn the results of the examinations. Mr. Munroe had his trunk with him, for he intended taking the midday coach to Chebucto. Donald was in a fever of excitement. He did not venture to put his hopes strongly upon the scholarship, but if he only did happen to win it, what joy for himself and his family!

At the academy door quite a crowd of boys had already gathered. Some parents were there too, all waiting impatiently for the announcements to be made. Presently the janitor opened the doors and called out that they should go into the head master's room. In they poured, somewhat noisily, and took their seats. When the room was quiet, Mr. Patterson proceeded to read in alphabetical order the names of those who had succeeded in passing, and the name of Donald Grant duly appeared in its place. He next indicated the forms to which the success-

ful candidates would be assigned, and when Donald was placed in a more advanced form than any of the others, Mr. Munroe gave him an affectionate grip on the arm, whispering:

"That looks well for the scholarship, Donald."

Then there came a dead silence, during which Donald could hear his heart beat. The head master always made the most of an important announcement. He never hurried about it. At last he was ready, and after peering into the faces of the boys before him as if trying to recognize one of them, he cleared his throat, and in his most imposing manner said:

"I have much pleasure in announcing that the scholarship annually offered by the trustees of this academy has, at this examination, been won by Donald Grant, whose answers, both oral and written, were highly creditable; in fact, quite above the ordinary standard. If Donald Grant is present, will he please come up to my desk?"

Blushing furiously, Donald somewhat awkwardly made his way to the desk, amid a faint round of applause that almost at once died away into a murmur of surprise and buzz of curious questioning. Who was this stranger who had thus intruded and carried off the coveted honor? Some were able to answer: "Oh, he's one of Grant the carpenter's boys, from out Rivervale way," whereupon there was a scornful sniffing of the air, and a passage of supposed-to-be-witty remarks upon his appearance and clothing. Poor Donald certainly had made an ill be-

ginning if he wished to be popular at the academy. He should have been content with third or fourth place at the best. The carrying away of the scholarship by a youngster from a crossroads' school was an impertinence not to be endured in silence. They would manifest their disapprobation at the first opportunity.

But Donald had no suspicion of this as he stood before the head master awaiting his pleasure. Rising from his seat, Mr. Patterson, with the gracious condescension of a royal potentate, extended his hand and shook Donald's gravely.

"I am glad to welcome so promising a pupil to the academy," he said. "You have only to show the same diligence and thoroughness in continuing your studies that you did in preparing for this examination, in order to become an honor to the institution. Here is your certificate entitling you to tuition and text-books free. On Monday morning you will, with the others, be assigned to your classes."

As the gathering was dispersing, one or two of the smaller boys came up to give Donald a look of hesitating admiration, and a couple of the older folk said something congratulatory; but he hurried off with Mr. Munroe, whose coach would soon be starting.

"This was well worth waiting for," said the teacher. "You have done even better than the best I hoped for you——"

"All thanks to you, sir," broke in Donald, giving the other's hand a grateful hug.

“Oh, no, Donald, not *all*, by any means! Of course, I helped. Well, I want to say this while I have the chance. Your new associates will not like you any the better for running off with the scholarship, or for being put into the third form at the start. They will no doubt try to make it a little uncomfortable for you for a while. Now you must be very patient. If you lose your temper, they will gain the very point they want to make. Above all things, never complain to any of the masters, no matter how much you may be tormented. That is a false step. One word more. Make yourself popular with the masters. Not by playing courtier, of course, but simply by doing exactly what they direct, even though they may seem unreasonable or even in error. It never pays, Donald, to undertake to bring a master to book. They are supposed to be omniscient, you know,” Mr. Munroe added, with a quaint smile, “and it is no doubt in the interest of school discipline that the supposition should not be rudely disturbed.”

Presently the coach rattled up to the hotel door. Mr. Munroe got into the box seat, and with a cheery “Good-bye, Donald, lad, and God bless you, I will write you a letter some day,” started on his homeward journey, while Donald followed the coach with misty eyes until it rolled around the turn of the street and disappeared.

Then he bethought himself of the dear ones out at Rivervale still in ignorance of his success, and he hastened to harness up Nelson and to make as good time as possible homeward.

What a happy household that was when he burst in upon them with the news! His mother clasped him again and again in her arms, murmuring: "My dear, good boy! My noble boy! A proud woman this day is the one that gave you birth."

Here was the first delicious taste of gratified ambition. The myriad worries and disappointments that beset her were for the nonce swept out of her life, and she gave herself up to the unrestrained enjoyment of the honor Donald had brought to the family.

As soon as he could get the boy out of his mother's arms, Mr. Grant hurried over to the squire with him. There were several people in the shop, but the proud father did not mind them, and dragging Donald forward, cried out: "Squire, Donald's won the academy scholarship!"

The squire looked up from his books in some surprise at this sudden interruption, and then, at once taking in the situation, broke into a hearty smile that lighted up his whole countenance.

"Eh! you don't tell me? Won the scholarship! Good—very good. You are a credit to Rivervale, Donald. Come here, my lad."

When Donald approached, he patted him kindly on the head, saying: "Must be good stuff inside here, eh, laddie? Take this with the squire's blessing, and may luck be with you."

Diving into his deep trousers' pocket he produced an English sovereign, and putting it into the centre of the

boy's right palm, closed his fingers tightly over it, saying in an undertone: "You will be needing some things to fit you out. Spend that, and if it is not enough let me know, and you shall have another."

Truly this was a wonderful day for Donald—the like of which it was hardly possible he would have in his life again. Not a cloud dulled the hopeful horizon. He had begun to realize his ambitions under the most promising auspices. Providence had smiled upon him hitherto. That it might continue to do so was the earnest prayer of his fond mother when she came to take one last look at him before retiring for the night.

CHAPTER V.

MAKING HIS WAY.

TO be a regular attendant at the Beechmount Academy was no slight undertaking for Donald Grant. It meant eight miles of travel every day in the week except Saturday and Sunday, and for this travel he had nothing to depend upon save his own legs. He might, of course, get an occasional ride, but there was no certainty about it, and in calculating the time it would take him to reach the academy in the morning, he would not be safe in relying upon any such possible aid; for he might have to foot it all the way notwithstanding, and late-comers were severely frowned upon.

To be sure, on a fine, bright, autumn day a tramp of four miles was nothing to alarm such a sturdy, enduring young chap as Donald; but autumn days were sometimes rainy, and then there was the winter ahead.

It was not Donald who thought of this. His head was too full of happiness to worry about such things. It was the quiet, thoughtful, affectionate Hugh who, on the Sunday before his brother began his attendance, as they were all driving in to church, began to ask anxious questions about it. He had a foreboding nature, and did not like the idea of Donald tramping those eight long miles every day, rain or shine.

But Donald made very light of the difficulties Hugh suggested.

"Tut, Hughie," he laughed, "you talk as if I were a little chap like Bob or Harry. What do I care for a four-mile tramp? and then I will often get a lift, you know."

"Maybe you will, sometimes, Donald," answered Hugh, shaking his head doubtfully; "but there will be many more times that you'll have to walk. I wish we lived in the village. We are so far away."

Hugh had a great longing for the larger society a home in Beechmount would have made possible, and he really envied Donald the daily visits he would henceforth make. It made him for the time regret that he had taken to business instead of books.

Mr. Grant, who had been a silent listener to the conversation, here broke in: "Never attempt to cross a bridge until you come to it, Hugh. Time enough to be concerned about Donald getting in and out from the academy when the difficulties occur. Well, here we are, almost at the church. Hugh, you put the horses up. The rest of us will go in and take our seats."

As the little procession of Grants, headed by the father and mother, filed up the narrow aisle to their pew—which was to the right of the pulpit—there was a distinct rustle of curiosity among the congregation already assembled; for all were eager to get a good look at the boy who had carried off the scholarship.

Donald could not fail to be conscious of the concen-

tration of curious eyes upon him, and, blushing hotly, he pretended to be deeply absorbed in a study of the hymn book until the announcement of the opening hymn by the pastor gave him relief.

After the service was over, Mr. and Mrs. Grant were in receipt of a number of congratulations from their friends upon their boy's success, and Donald was patted approvingly upon the head by sundry old gentlemen, and upon his red cheeks by various ladies, both young and old, all in token of their gratification at his achievement.

That was a Sunday long to be remembered ; and many a time in after years did its recollection bring a ray of sunshine for Mrs. Grant, the fond, proud mother, into hours darkened with trouble and sorrow.

The next morning at sharp half-past seven, Donald set blithely forth to reach the Beechmount Academy ere the last bell should commence ringing. It was clear and cool, and his cheery whistle could be heard long after he had crossed the bridge and was climbing the hill beyond. His mother stood at the door and watched him until he was out of sight.

"God bless thee, and keep thee, Donald," she murmured. "My heart tells me that you are to be the stay and comfort of my old age. May no evil befall thee nor harm come nigh thee, as you go through the journey of life! You have a brave heart and a strong heart, and, best of all, a pure heart. Oh, how I love you!" And dashing away a tear, she went back to her work.

Donald plodded steadily forward mile after mile, for, as it happened, no carriage or cart overtook him. The nearer he drew to the village, the graver grew his spirit. The merry whistling ceased, and he advanced in silence; for, naturally enough, the thought of the ordeal before him made him pause. How would he be received by his new companions? He was not on terms of anything like intimacy with one of them, although he knew several of them slightly—the doctor's son and one or two others. He could, therefore, look to no one for sympathy and support.

The first note of the last bell rang out just as he reached the academy door, and hardly glancing at the group of boys dawdling about the steps, he hurried inside, where he found Mr. Patterson standing in the main hall, a roll of names in his hand, and directing the scholars where to go as fast as they entered. He recognized Donald at once.

"Ah, ha!" he said, smiling graciously. "You are the winner of the scholarship. You go into Mr. Gunton's room." And with a wave of the roll he indicated the room at his right.

Donald somewhat timidly made his way to the room. A number of boys had already gathered, and all at once turned their eyes upon him with the pitiless stare of young barbarians. No one offered him a seat, and presently, as the painful awkwardness of his position showed itself in the distress of his countenance, some began to laugh and others to make faces at him. A band of

school boys can be as cruel as any of the savages of Central Africa.

Just then the master, who had been bending over his record book, lifted his head and discovered Donald. He was an Englishman, named Gunton—a competent scholar, but without special talent for teaching. He taught only because no better occupation offered itself. He was young, fair, precise, and wore eyeglasses, then somewhat of a novelty. Adjusting these to his nose, he proceeded to increase poor Donald's embarrassment by surveying him as curiously as though he were some odd kind of animal. Finally he managed to say in a decided drawl: "Ah, a new scholar, I presume. Will you please come forward?"

Feeling more like whirling around and bolting for the door, Donald went up to the desk.

"May I ask your name?" inquired the teacher, in the same monotonous drawl.

"Donald Grant, sir," was the prompt reply.

"Ah, indeed!" said Mr. Gunton, with a sudden access of interest. "The boy that won the scholarship; and you have come into my room at the start? Quite unusual, that. You must have been well prepared. I hope your work here will bear out the reputation with which you begin. Please take a seat on the first row for the present."

Donald went to his seat in a much lighter frame of mind than that in which he had entered the room. The change in his teacher's tone and manner on hearing his name gave him courage. If Mr. Gunton would only be

good to him, he could the more easily wait until the boys came around and admitted him into their friendship.

At sharp nine o'clock the door was locked, and Mr. Gunton read a prayer in the most formal manner possible, concluding with the Lord's prayer, which the boys were expected to repeat after him. Not more than half of them ever did so, however.

Of course, there were no lessons to be recited that morning, so the time was taken up in re-arranging the classes, Mr. Gunton having two forms in his room,—the third and fourth,—in designating the work for the next day, and otherwise clearing the decks for action.

The head master came in during the morning to see how matters were progressing. He also brought a complete set of text-books for Donald, in each of which the boy's name was duly inscribed. Donald had never owned so many books before in his life, and was almost bewildered at his sudden wealth; a Cæsar, a Latin dictionary, a grammar, an algebra, a Euclid, an arithmetic, an English history, etc., and three good, big, exercise books in which to enter his work. In their spotless, shining covers they seemed to the delighted lad the most wonderful collection of books in the world.

Some of the other boys gave him very envious, covetous looks as he joyfully fondled his new possessions. Their fathers had to pay for all the books they used, and here was a youngster from out in the country somewhere, getting a fine supply all for nothing. It did seem galling to their minds distorted by jealousy, and, whispering

together, they made up a nice little plot, viz.: to waylay unsuspecting Donald at recess, and jostle him so that he would drop some of his brand new books, when they would pick them up and run off with them, compelling him to go in chase, and thus affording them lots of amusement.

Happily, however, this fell conspiracy was quite innocently brought to naught by Mr. Gunton. When the boys were dismissed, Donald was detained getting his books into a pile that would be easily carried, and thus it came about that he and the teacher left the room together. As luck would have it too, the latter entered into conversation with him, and the two walked down the street, while the disappointed conspirators, seeing their plans thus frustrated, went off in a very disgusted frame of mind.

It was out of the question for Donald to carry that large package of books home if he had to walk all the way. But here again fortune favored him, for in front of one the stores he found the wagon of a farmer living a little beyond Rivervale, and on inquiry learned that the owner was going home soon and would be glad to have his company. So he had a pleasant drive home, and arrived there in high spirits, eager to exhibit his treasures to his admiring family.

The next morning his work at the academy began in earnest. He arrived in good time, having had a lift part of the way, and instead of going at once into the schoolroom, waited about the door hoping to begin an acquaintance with some of the boys.

But no one made any overtures to him, and such slight advances as he ventured to make were so coolly, if not rudely, received that, much disheartened, he went to his desk to await the arrival of the master. He could not understand why the boys should treat him so strangely. It could not be because he did not belong to the village, for he knew that at least a score of the academy boys came in like himself from the country every morning. He racked his brain to think of anything he could possibly have done to give offense, and there flashed into his mind the question, was it his winning the scholarship? Surely not! They could not be so mean and jealous as that. Yet what other explanation was there? The ringing of the last bell and the tumultuous rush of the boys to their places cut short his cogitations. Prayers were read and the work of the day begun.

It usually takes a couple of days for the scholars to settle down to their studies after the long midsummer vacation; and this morning very few were properly prepared, although the lessons had been duly apportioned the day before. Donald, however, had studied his lessons thoroughly, and the consequence was that, from his place as new boy at the foot of his classes, he suddenly rose to be head in one, third in another, and halfway to the top in a third.

Here was an adding of fresh fuel to the flame with a vengeance. A new boy to get from the foot clean to the head of the class in Latin grammar in one day, and all because he was prig enough to begin to study right off,

instead of taking a couple of days to settle down as the other boys had done. Clearly, Donald's road to popularity in that schoolroom was to be a rough and thorny one. The boys seemed to be completely blinded by jealousy to all instincts of justice and fair play. They thought the new boy had taken a mean advantage of them, when a moment's calm consideration would have shown them how absurd was the suspicion. But who can be more unreasonable or unjust than boys on the wrong track? They were all on the wrong track, and until their eyes should be opened, there was small chance of Donald getting fair consideration at their hands.

When the midday recess came, he went out with the others. Some of them jostled him rather roughly in the hall, he thought, but it might have been an accident, and he took no notice of it. On the green outside a number of his classmates, with others, were gathered, and as he passed near them they broke out into hissing and cries of "Sneak!" "Toady!" "Rivervale rowdy!" and so forth.

There was no mistaking for whom this was intended. The hot blood sprang to Donald's face. Every nerve thrilled with anger and indignation. Almost unconsciously his fists closed tightly. His heart was beating like a trip hammer within his breast.

Drawing himself up and holding his shut fists close to his sides, he suddenly turned upon his tormentors, who quailed a little before his menacing attitude, and demanded in a tone of wrathful indignation:

"Why do you call me such names? What have I done?"

Not expecting to be thus suddenly brought to book, the boys were thrown into some confusion, and for a moment no spokesman appeared to answer for them. Then some one from the depths of the group called out in a hesitating way, "You won the scholarship."

"And what if I did?" retorted Donald, still maintaining his ready-to-strike attitude. "Didn't I win it fair?"

There was a sort of confused murmur which might be taken to imply, "Suppose you did," and then another boy added, "But you don't belong to the village."

"What if I don't," was the prompt reply. "That was no reason why I shouldn't try for the scholarship, was it?"

Again he had scored a point. There was no answering his question, and his accusers were driven to bring up their last charge:

"You took advantage of the others to-day."

"How did I take advantage?" cried Donald, with a touch of scorn in his voice. "They did not know their lessons and I did know mine. Was there anything wrong about that?"

Donald was fast gaining the day; his gallant bearing, his prompt and reasonable retorts, his evident indifference to the numbers arrayed against him, all told in his favor. The tide of feeling was fast veering around, when one of the older boys, who felt particularly envious of him, and

who saw that he was gaining ground, growled out in a sulky, obstinate tone :

“You’re a sneak and a coward, anyway.”

This was more than Donald could stand. Like a flash, he darted at the speaker, caught him by the shoulder, and shaking his fist in his face was about to cry, “Take that back or I’ll beat you black and blue,” when suddenly the voice of the Principal fell upon the excited crowd and settled it like magic.

“Boys! boys!” he said. “What is the meaning of this? Fighting already, Donald Grant?” This last question in a tone of mingled surprise and disappointment.

CHAPTER VI.

A WORTHY VICTORY.

WHEN the sound of Mr. Patterson's voice fell on his ears, Donald instantly loosened his hold of the boy who had so stirred his wrath, the flush of anger on his cheek changed to one of shame, and, turning to the head master, he said, with eyes bent upon the ground: "I lost my temper, sir. I wasn't going to fight him, but to make him take back the names he called me. I am very sorry, sir."

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed the head master, his eyes snapping sharply behind his spectacles. "There are always two sides to a story, and I must hear both of them before I make up my mind who is to blame. Will all of you boys be good enough to come to my room?"

With very crestfallen and somewhat apprehensive countenances, the boys followed Mr. Patterson into his room. As soon as they were all seated, he called up Donald and asked him to tell his part in the affair. There was a murmur of anxiety as Donald rose to his feet. Now was his chance to revenge himself finely upon his tormentors. If he were to relate everything that had occurred, they would be put in an awkward box indeed; and the result would probably be the imposition of very unpleasant penalties. But to the surprise and vast relief

of them all, when Donald opened his mouth it was to say: "If you please, sir, I'd rather not tell anything about it. Please excuse me, won't you, sir?" And there was quite a plaintive tone in his voice as he made the request.

Mr. Patterson seemed slightly annoyed for a moment, and was just about to address a further question to Donald, when he checked himself. He was a shrewd man, and had divined the boy's nature. Naturally enough, he shrank from being placed in the position of an informer. Even on the lowest ground—that of mere policy—it was to be avoided, if possible, for who is held in greater contempt among boys than a telltale? So Mr. Patterson simply said: "Very well, Donald; I will not compel you," and waved him to his seat.

Then he looked around among the boys, who were wondering what the next turn in affairs would be, until his eyes fell upon a little chap who, although not lacking in sense, was somehow a sort of butt for the others, and he called out: "Louis Smith, come to my desk, please."

Looking very much perturbed, Louis crawled slowly to the desk, and then Mr. Patterson required of him an account of the disturbance. Glad to get off so easily, Louis at once launched off into particulars, and gave them with commendable accuracy too, taking care not to individualize, but describing fairly enough what had been Donald's provocation and how he had met it.

When he had finished, the head master turned to Donald. "Has Louis stated accurately what took

place?" he asked, "or is there anything you wish to add?"

"Nothing at all, sir," answered Donald.

Mr. Patterson was silent for a few moments as though considering just how to express himself, and then he spoke: "Scholars, I feel bound to tell you that I am surprised and sorry at the way in which you have acted toward a new boy, whom you should have considered all the more because he was a stranger to the most of you and did not belong to the village. I also feel bound to say that, in view of the circumstances, I think Donald Grant behaved very well indeed. He showed no temper until you had provoked him beyond endurance, and now I want to ask you this: After what has taken place, do any of you still think Donald Grant is a sneak and a coward?"

Here Mr. Patterson paused, and at once there was a hearty chorus of "No, sir; no, indeed, sir," which broke out into a laugh when some boy far back in the rear added, "He's a brick, sir."

Mr. Patterson looked pleased. There was evident sincerity in the boys' response. Donald Grant had, by his manly conduct, overcome their baseless prejudice against himself, and made a good start toward winning their hearts. He would not spoil this happy issue by imposing any penalties, so, with a pleasant smile, he went on to say: "I am sure Donald will now consider that you have taken all your ugly names back, and that you are sorry for having used them. Let this be the end of

the matter. Let Donald be one of yourselves, and you will get along well together. You are dismissed now for the remainder of recess."

Immensely relieved at this unexpected but most welcome termination of the episode, the boys rushed out of the room cheering for both the head master and Donald; and when the latter reached the playground he was at once surrounded, and overwhelmed with invitations to join in the games that were promptly organized. He soon showed himself quick to learn and agile in playing, so that ere the day was out his schoolmates came to the opinion that the "Rivervale Rowdy" would, in a little while, be a match for any of them at their sports.

Thenceforth Donald's way at the academy was smooth enough so far as his relations with the other boys were concerned. Of course, he had his disputes and differences such as boys will have. His temper was quick, his will strong, he loved his own way, and was just as prone to think it the very best way as the most of us are in regard to our own. But these little matters did not prevent him from being thoroughly popular. Full-sized for his age, well-built, quite good-looking, daring of spirit, fertile of expedient, intensely fond of fun in every form, a strong swimmer, a swift runner, and, if need be, a hard hitter, Donald, by natural process of selection, soon became a recognized leader; and many a village boy went without his dinner in order that he might be in Donald's train during the long noon recess, and enjoy the sport that was sure to be had in one way or another.

Nor did he suffer his fondness for play—now capable of being indulged to a greater extent than ever before—to interfere with his studies. Despite Mr. Gunton's glasses and rather repellent drawl, Donald in a little while came to respect him highly, and even like him. He was a sound scholar, and if approached in the right way, willing enough to place his stores of knowledge at an inquirer's disposal.

Donald did not at first discover this right way, but later he came to understand just how to touch the right spring, and after that he and his teacher got along famously. Several times during the winter Mr. Gunton drove out to Donald's home and took tea with the family; and so sure as he did, the audacious Charlie mimicked his drawl for days afterward, to the amusement of his younger brothers.

The winter proved a very severe one indeed. Great quantities of snow fell, burying the fences that outlined the road, and making it no easy task to keep the right track after sundown. Hugh's forebodings of difficulty began to find fulfillment. Some days there were, indeed, when it would have been madness for a strong man to have attempted to make his way into Beechmount from Rivervale, and Donald had perforce to remain at home. But if the weather were at all moderate, mounted upon sagacious old Nelson, who would otherwise have been eating his head off in the stable for lack of work, Donald, wrapped up as warmly as a loving mother could wrap him, his books strapped on his back, and a bag of oats

for Nelson at the saddle-bow, would trot off through the biting cold, and never draw rein until he reached the academy. Here Nelson was snugly housed in Mr. Patterson's stable, and Donald, glowing with heat from his active exercise, would hurry to his place in the classroom.

One afternoon, never to be forgotten, he had a narrow escape from perishing in the snowdrifts. The morning was dull and threatening, but the snow held off until long past noon, and then began to fall in a fitful, undecided way, as though it could not make up its mind whether to come down in a real storm or not.

Mr. Patterson urged Donald not to go home, but to remain over night with him. Donald, however, feared lest his mother would worry if he did not return at the usual time, and, thanking the head master, rode off into the gathering storm. He had hardly left the village a mile behind before the snow, now fully decided, came down in sheets of white that fairly blotted out the landscape. Fortunately the road was well beaten, and Nelson had no difficulty in finding his way; yet the incessant beating of the large, heavy flakes into the eyes of both horse and rider was very bewildering, and if the track should become obscure their situation would be indeed serious.

Pressing forward as fast as he could, Donald presently reached the shelter of the woods, and here for a time had some respite from the storm, the thick spruce grove sheltering him from the wind, and there being no chance of missing the way.



Donald Grant.

It was when he came out again on the other side of the woods, and stood upon the top of the hill looking down into the valley where Rivervale lay nestling amongst the skirts of the opposite slope, that he realized his danger. The storm, now at its height, struck full in his face, leaving its load of damp, tenacious snow that clings to the eyelids, and that covered his face as fast as it could be brushed away. Even steady, sure-footed old Nelson seemed frightened and unwilling to face the pitiless blast. He would fain have turned about and gone back to the shelter of the woods. But Donald knew better than to permit that. There was only one course to pursue—namely, to press forward until he reached one of the farmhouses, of which there were several between him and the bridge.

Under ordinary circumstances Donald could have found his way right enough in spite of the storm; but this winter, so heavy had the drifts been, that the farmers, in despair, gave up keeping the regular road open, and made a new road across the fields, which wound hither and thither in a most perplexing manner. Nelson seemed to be entirely at fault, although Donald left him altogether to the exercise of his own sagacity. The pelt-ing snow not only blinded him, but made him sulky. He stumbled sullenly along until, at last, down he went on both knees, pitching his rider clear over his head.

Fortunately, Donald held on to the reins in his tumble, or the wily old horse would probably have bolted back to the woods. As it was, when he picked himself

up, not a whit worse for his somersault into the soft snow, Nelson would not suffer him to remount, and after several vain attempts he had to give up the idea.

This was a serious addition to the difficulties of his situation. The snow lay soft and deep, rendering the walking very exhausting; and besides, he could not see as far on foot as he could from Nelson's back. Halting for a minute, he put up a brief and earnest petition for Divine help. The words, "Thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me," often used by his father at family prayer, came into his mind and comforted him greatly. Slipping the bridle over his left arm, he renewed his battle with the storm.

Stumbling about in the yielding snow, he presently struck what he felt sure was the right track, and followed it up persistently until at last the grateful gleam of a light shot through the mist of flying flakes, and with a cry of joy he hastened toward it, dragging the ungrateful Nelson after him. Several times he lost his beacon light, and feared lest it had been put out; but it was only a snowdrift intervening, and a few moments after it gladdened his eyes again.

Weary almost to faintness, he pressed steadily forward. The cheery rays brightened as he advanced. Then the dark shadow of the house in whose window it stood began to loom up through the obscurity. Summoning all his energies for a final effort, Donald dashed through the snow straight for the house, and dropped at the door, too utterly exhausted to raise the knocker.

But a few minutes rest restored his strength sufficiently for him to make his presence known. The door was promptly opened by the good woman of the house who, seeing a snow-clad figure, exclaimed, in a hearty tone:

"Come in, till I see who you are. It's no night for a Christian to be out, anyway."

Donald, dropping the bridle, at once stepped into the warm, cheery kitchen, brushing the snow from his face as he did so; and Mrs. McKenzie, then recognizing him, cried:

"Why, it's Donald Grant, to be sure. You foolish lad, whatever possessed you to come out in such a storm as this? It's a mercy you got to our house at all. Sit down in this rocking chair and tell me all about it when you get rested a bit."

Donald sank into the comfortable chair, feeling almost ready to cry with joy and gratitude at having reached a safe haven. But he managed to get control of his feelings while good Mrs. McKenzie bustled about preparing a hot drink of black currant cordial, her supreme specific for cold, weariness, and other light bodily ailments.

"Here, Donald," she said, when she had it ready, "drink this down and see how good you'll feel."

The hot, sweet drink was like nectar to Donald, and when he had emptied the glass, his tongue began to wag at once as he explained to his hostess how he happened to be out in the storm.

"Well, now," said she, clapping him on the shoulder.

"Boys and men are all alike the world over. For fear your mother would worry at your not getting home to-night, you run the risk of never getting home at all, which would be a sad worry indeed. Not one step farther do you go this night, Donald. Angus will put the horse in the barn, and you shall have the spare room. Then in the morning, if the storm is over, you can get away home as fast as you like."

Donald thanked Mrs. McKenzie, and did just as he was bidden, much to her satisfaction. The next morning he awoke with the sun. The storm had all passed away. The day was bright and clear. So eager was he to reach home that he would have gone off without his breakfast; but of this Mrs. McKenzie would not hear. After breakfast, bidding "good-bye" to his hospitable entertainer, he spared not Nelson, deep as the snow was, and ere long rode up to the door of the white cottage, which was instantly flung open by Mrs. Grant, exclaiming joyously:

"My darling Donald! Where were you all night? Were you out in the storm?"

"If I had been, mother dear, I am afraid I would not be here," answered Donald, laughing as he dismounted. "I spent the night at Mrs. McKenzie's." And giving his mother a hearty kiss, he went into the house with her to relate the adventures of the night.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM SCHOLAR TO TEACHER.

THE beginning of Donald's second year at the Beechmount Academy found him in the head master's room, and well on his way to the sixth form—in fact, certain to be promoted into it after the Christmas vacation. His progress under Mr. Gunton had been swift, yet steady. There was no need, nor indeed was there any suspicion, of favoritism. His classmates recognized his superiority as fully as did the teacher. When natural abilities of the quality he possessed were united with an ambition and a steadfast energy such as were his characteristics, the result could only be a record of more than ordinary brilliancy. Donald really had not a competitor in the classroom who could meet him on equal terms. At the midsummer closing he carried off every prize within his reach. It is true, the prizes were only books of moderate value. But how can the delight they gave to him and his family be described?

On taking his place in Mr. Patterson's room, however, he was not slow in finding out that his case would no longer be one of "Eclipse first and the rest nowhere." Now he would have the cream of the academy as his associates, and the head master tolerated no "scamp work" in his room. He did not expect all to do equally

well, but he did expect and insist upon it that all should do their best. If they were only one-talent boys, he did not demand the same from them as the ten-talent boys; but he held them down to a faithful use of their one talent. The consequence was that the lessons were always well prepared, and Donald discovered that making his way up toward the head in his different classes would be a much more tedious business than it had been in Mr. Gunton's room.

But this did not trouble his spirit a particle. On the contrary, he was glad of it. The keen competition inspired him to even greater diligence in his studies. He was determined to maintain the record he had established for himself, if it could be done; and so close was his attention to his books, that his health would have suffered but for the long journey in the open air that lay between his home and the academy. This now proved a real blessing, compelling him to take the exercise he might otherwise have neglected.

He had not been long in Mr. Patterson's room before he came to be on quite as good terms with him as he had been with Mr. Gunton. Despite his apparently brusque, impatient manner, the head master was always glad to be questioned about the subjects of study, provided the questioner put inquiries that were not seeking for the solution of the difficulties he should have solved himself, but an intelligent demand for further light upon matters that were not sufficiently clear. Often after the classes were dismissed for the day, Donald would linger for a

while to talk over some difficulty with the head master, and he always found him ready to listen and prompt to respond. He had told Mr. Patterson of his great ambition, viz.: to take a complete course at Chebucto University; and this fact deepened his teacher's interest in him. He felt sure that if he did go to the university he would reflect honor upon the academy, and he was resolved to help him in preparation to the full extent of his opportunity.

Thus matters progressed smoothly and satisfactorily. Donald continued to be popular among his classmates, and to be a recognized leader in their sports as well as in their studies. As the end of the term drew near, a livelier interest than usual was felt among the academy boys with reference to the prizes. Donald was certainly not going to have it all his own way this time. In the sixth form, there were more than one who might fairly be considered his match. Arthur Henderson, the doctor's son, was a very bright lad, somewhat inclined to carelessness, but now stirred up to his best endeavors. Sam Hill, the son of the postmaster, though not so quick as Arthur, made up in plodding patience what he lacked in mental alertness, and he too had resolved that whatever victories Donald won he would have to put forth his very best endeavors to secure.

Of course, the three boys made no boast of their respective resolutions, yet somehow or other their classmates were as fully aware of them as if they had, and almost unconsciously divided themselves into three par-

ties, according as they put their faith in Arthur, Sam, or Donald. Had the deplorable mania for betting, now so prevalent, then infected Beechmount with its demoralizing contagion, the boys would assuredly have been wagering their entire personal possessions on behalf of their favorites. But happily they knew nothing of that miserable way of supporting opinions, and contented themselves with good-humored reiteration of their belief that Donald, Arthur, or Sam, as the case might be, would not give the other two a ghost of a show, but would just clean out the prize list.

The final examinations for the sixth form were always wholly written. It was in the lovely, leafy month of June when they were held, and the interest in the respective standing of the three leaders was so intense that some of the boys were actually as much excited about it as they were about their own standing.

It took two days to get through the papers which were set. Donald felt a little nervous at first, and the answers came slowly to his mind ; but presently the sight of the two competitors he feared the most scribbling away as if for dear life banished his nervousness, and spurred on his mind to its highest working power. His pen went flying over the paper at a rate that showed he knew well what to reply to the printed questions on the sheet before him.

After the examinations were over, several days must elapse before the results could be declared. Those days Donald spent at home, thoroughly enjoying the relief

from study, and romping about with Charlie and "Boban-harry" in as lively a fashion as if he were no more of a bookworm than rattle-brained Charlie himself. His brothers were delighted to have him in this humor, for since the Christmas holidays he had had no time to spare to play with them. Now he was entirely at their disposal, and they enjoyed his society all the more for having been so long deprived of it.

On Thursday morning, June 29, the results were to be announced, and the following morning the closing exercises were to be held, when the prizes would be presented.

It was with a fiercely throbbing heart that Donald, mounted upon Nelson,—for his impatience could not brook the slow method of walking,—hastened toward the village that Thursday morning. The day was gloriously fine, but he had no eyes for the beauties of nature nor ears for the music of birds. His one absorbing thought was, "How have I come out? Have I won any prize at all?"

On reaching the academy, he sprang from Nelson and rushed to the board on which the announcements were posted. It was surrounded by a crowd of boys, through whom he impatiently pushed his way. The results were up—Henderson, Hill, and himself had passed all their examinations so well as to be placed together in the highest rank. But how about the prizes? Were they not to be awarded? Ah! here at the bottom of the list was a footnote which said that, owing to the very slight difference in merit between the papers of the three leading compe-

titors, a further consideration of them would be necessary; and the winners of the prizes, therefore, could not be announced until the following morning.

Donald felt both disappointed and relieved. He would have to endure the agony of suspense for another twenty-four hours, but at the same time it was clear that he and the other two were so close together that his chance was as good as theirs, at any rate. Back home he rode, and strove to forget his anxiety by indulging in the wildest kind of skylarking with his younger brothers that he could invent; and then went to bed so tired out that, prizes or no prizes, he slept like one who had not a care in the world.

The next morning, bright and early, the Sunday carriage was brought out, the two horses harnessed to it, and the entire Grant family, decked out in their very best attire, drove in to witness the closing exercises, and, as they all greatly hoped, the triumph of their darling Donald.

The proceedings were held in the town hall, and the Grants being in good time secured some of the best seats, in which they established themselves, looking radiant, expectant, hopeful. The large hall was soon filled to the doors with an interested, eager audience. The academy boys occupied a block of seats right in front of the platform, and presently upon the platform came the head master and his assistants, the trustees of the academy, the ministers, the magistrates, the doctors, the lawyers, the postmaster, and other dignitaries of the place; for

the closing exercises of Beechmount Academy were always regarded as one of the most important events on the village calendar.

After certain preliminaries, the head master rose amid breathless attention, to declare the results of the recent examinations. First he went through the list of promotions from lower to higher forms, then the list of those who had, so to speak, graduated from the academy, and then came to the prize list. There was not a person in the hall unaware of the special interest attaching to this list on this occasion, and the silence was profound as, after a preliminary cough and careful adjustment of his spectacles, he began to speak.

Having referred to the unusual circumstances in connection with the examination, and the difficulty of accurately adjusting the values of the answers given in by the three pupils who were ahead of all the others, Mr. Patterson proceeded to state that after an impartial re-valuation, made with the assistance of the other two masters, the following conclusion had been arrived at:

The prize in classics went to Donald Grant, the prize in mathematics to Arthur Henderson, and the prize in English to Samuel Hill.

With regard to the silver medal for highest general proficiency, that also went to Donald Grant, who had five more points than Arthur Henderson, who, in his turn, had only three more points than Samuel Hill. The competition, therefore, was extremely close, and reflected the utmost credit upon all three contestants.

Tremendous rounds of applause greeted each announcement as it fell from the head master's lips, and at the close each of the prize winners became the centre of a group of friends showering upon them their enthusiastic congratulations, so that it was some time before order could be sufficiently restored to enable the reading of the prize list to be completed.

Upon the whole, the results of the close competition in the sixth form gave general satisfaction. Arthur Henderson, who had never won a prize before, was well satisfied with coming out first in mathematics; quiet, plodding Sam Hill had not hoped for better fortune than befell him, and if Donald had any qualms of disappointment at winning only one prize, he was more than consoled by the medal for general proficiency, the highest honor of all.

It was a very happy family party that returned to Rivervale in the big express wagon. The pride of the household had fully sustained his reputation, and when in the evening not only Grant, the blacksmith, but actually the old squire himself, came over to offer his hearty congratulations, the cup of Mr. and Mrs. Grant's happiness seemed full to overflowing; and there was an unusual fervor in the former's voice at family prayer as he returned thanks to God for the joys and triumphs of the day.

Long after all the other members of the family were in their beds, Donald and his father sat talking together upon the doorstep. The subject of their conversation

was, of course, the boy's future, and the moonlight falling upon his face revealed a dejected, irritated expression that seemed strangely at variance with the bright, happy look of but a little while before.

The change was not without good cause, and Donald could hardly be blamed if the expression of his countenance was altered; for he had just learned from his father a fact of which he had hitherto been in entire ignorance—that it would be impossible for Mr. Grant to send him to the university that autumn as had been the father's full intention and the son's confident expectation. The reason was readily given. Mr. Grant had become security for a brother in another part of the Province. The brother's business had proved a disastrous failure, and it would require every dollar that Mr. Grant could get together to discharge the liability arising out of his obligation.

"But, father," broke out Donald impetuously, upon having this explained to him, "why must you pay all? Why don't they make Uncle Joe pay some too?"

"Because, my dear Donald," replied Mr. Grant, with a sad smile, "Uncle Joe has nothing to pay. He is utterly ruined."

Donald gave a shrug of disgust. "I don't care, father; it is not fair," he cried, "to make you pay so much money. You did not lose the money, Uncle Joe did. Oh, why did you ever go security for him?" he added, with a sigh of profound regret.

"Never mind about that, Donald," said his father, in

a tone implying that he did not propose to discuss the wisdom of his own doings with his son. "I have incurred the obligation, and now must do my best to meet it; but I need not tell you how sorely grieved I am at having to disappoint you about the university. I'm sure I was as eager for your going as you were yourself."

Donald was silent for a minute, then looking earnestly into his father's face, he asked: "Could you not borrow the money, father? Wouldn't Squire Stewart lend it to you?"

Mr. Grant shook his head in a decisive way. "I have never borrowed a dollar yet, Donald; and, God helping me, I never will. You would not be my tempter, would you, my son?"

Donald's face clouded for a moment, and then broke into a smile. "No, father, there is not much fear of that. But I do wish there was some way of getting the money to pay for me at the university."

"Did it ever occur to you that you might earn it yourself, Donald?" asked Mr. Grant, looking at him intently.

"I earn it! How could I, father?" inquired Donald, opened-eyed in wonder.

"How did Mr. McLeod and Mr. Munroe, and other students at the university pay their own way?" questioned Mr. Grant.

"By teaching, father? I become a teacher?" And Donald laughed merrily at the idea of such a thing, for he deemed himself quite too young to fill a teacher's place.

"By teaching, Donald, certainly. Why not? You are fully competent, even if you are rather young," returned Mr. Grant, in a tone that showed he was thoroughly in earnest.

"But where would I get a school, father?" demanded Donald.

"Without going away from home, my son," answered his father; and then he went on to explain that he had had the matter in hand for some time past; that the Rivervale people wanted a school all the year round; that he had suggested Donald as the teacher to the other trustees, who had heartily consented to his being given the position; that the salary would be sufficient for him to save in two years enough to pay his expenses for a corresponding period at the university.

Donald listened to all this with strangely mingled feelings. The idea of teaching right at his own home both attracted and repelled him. The thought of the two years' delay was far from pleasant to his eager, ambitious nature; but the thought of paying his own way and not being a burden to his father was full of fascination. For another hour he discussed the question with his father, who answered him wisely, patiently, lovingly. Then, as if by a sudden inspiration, he sprang to his feet, and grasping his father's hand, cried in accents that rang with bright determination: "Father, I will take the position, and do my level best to be a good teacher. It will be hard work at first, no doubt, but I will just stick to it in spite of everything."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SMOOTHING OF THE WAY.

DONALD went to sleep that night in the full fervor of his resolution to undertake the office of teacher, and dreamed that he was in a large room, even more spacious than Mr. Patterson's, with a great number of boys before him who paid him the utmost respect, and rendered his task a very easy one.

But when he awoke to the reality of a dull, rainy day, and to the fact that he had pledged himself to an enterprise that would inevitably demand his utmost patience, determination, prudence, and self-control, in order to insure success, the dampening chill which had fallen upon the face of nature seemed to fall upon his heart also. The matter presented itself to him in a very different light from that in which it had presented itself the previous night. Many drawbacks that did not then suggest themselves did so now. He would, indeed, have much preferred making his first appearance as a teacher among strangers. That would not be one-half so hard as doing it among those who had been his friends and playmates from the beginning. The sorrowful words of Christ when his own neighbors were offended with him, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country and in his own house," persistently obtruded themselves

upon his thoughts. He would, of course, have his own younger brothers among his scholars. How was he ever going to keep the irrepressible Charlie in order, and what would he do were the twins to take it into their mischievous heads to so misbehave as to render condign punishment necessary in the interests of discipline?

He did not trouble his father with these misgivings, but he confided them all to his mother; and her shrewd, kindly counsel comforted and cheered him not a little.

"Donald, darling," she said, passing her hand softly over the crisp black curls that surmounted his flushed forehead, "you are too apt to want to cross the bridge before you come to it. Maybe, I don't say that they will, but maybe every one of the difficulties you have been worrying over will have to be faced by you. But they certainly will not all come at once, perhaps any two of them together; and surely, Donald, surely, you are quite equal to one at a time. Now don't you think you are?"

Donald laughed.

"Yes, mother, I do. You are quite right. I am too fond of meeting trouble half-way. I must really try and be more sensible. I have promised father to take the school, and I ought to be grateful for getting such a good chance to begin to earn something for myself, instead of grumbling over what may never happen."

And so, with the clouds in good part cleared away, Donald went off whistling cheerfully.

He would have two months of vacation before entering upon his new sphere of activity, and these he made up

his mind to spend not over his books, but in assisting his father to harvest the crops upon the score of acres the product of which materially helped to supplement the somewhat scanty profits of carriage making. Into the work of hay making, potato digging, and other agricultural tasks, he entered with the same vim that he did into his studies, and his vigorous action was not long in infecting his brothers; so that with Charlie, Duncan, Bob, and Harry as his willing lieutenants, he really took the work quite out of his father's hands, very much to Mr. Grant's gratification, as he was thus enabled to give more time to his shop than he had been free to do any summer before.

While Donald was in the very midst of this health-giving work, who should suddenly appear upon the scene, a most unexpected though most welcome visitor, but Mr. Munroe.

As the coach stopped one evening before Grant the blacksmith's door for the customary exchange of mail, out stepped the well-remembered teacher; and his quick eye catching sight of Donald sitting on the doorstep of his father's shop resting after the toils of the day, he called out:

"Is that you, Donald Grant? Have you any welcome for an old friend?"

At the sound of his voice, Donald sprang to his feet, and the next instant had Mr. Munroe's hands clasped in his.

"Mr. Munroe!" he cried, his face beaming with intense delight. "How glad I am to see you! Oh, but

you are welcome! A thousand times welcome!" And he wrung his hands again in very excess of joy.

Mr. Munroe's pale face flushed with pleasure at this greeting, which showed unmistakably how big and warm a place he held in his former scholar's heart.

"It is very, very pleasant, Donald," said he, "to get such a reception; and I have come to stay awhile if your mother can make room for me. I am taking a little holiday, and I could not resist the temptation to have a look at Rivervale and my good friends there. So that is just why I have come."

"Come right over to the house, sir," said Donald, picking up the valise which the driver had handed down.

"Won't father and mother be glad to see you again!"

Mr. Munroe's reception at the cottage was no less warm than Donald's had been. Mrs. Grant assured him that the spare bedroom was just waiting for him, and then bustled about getting him some supper. Every one of the family down to little Meg was delighted at the advent of the visitor, and to Mr. Munroe, who had lost both parents while a child, and who was practically alone in the world, there came a feeling of being thoroughly at home that was indescribably grateful.

His stay with them continued for a fortnight, and was a period of unalloyed happiness for Donald. It seemed that Mr. Munroe was now a gentleman of leisure. An uncle who had never done anything for him in his lifetime, atoned for his neglect when dying by leaving him

a snug fortune. It was therefore no longer necessary for him to work for his own support, and his state of health being far from satisfactory, he had decided to spend his days in study and travel, feeling sure they would not be many at best.

He was greatly pleased with Donald's progress, and his brilliant career at the academy. He also heartily approved of his plan to teach at Rivervale.

"It will do you a vast deal of good, Donald," said he, "and you will derive ever so much more benefit from your studies at the university because of having taught for a while."

Mr. Munroe entered heart and soul into the every-day life of the family. He went with the boys to the hay field, and botanized along the fences while they filled up the cocks or loaded the hay carts. He bathed with them in the river at sundown. He took them off for long rambles in the back pasture, and pointed out to them a thousand things in the worlds of plant, insect, and bird life that they had never noticed before; and then, in the long warm evenings he delighted Mr. and Mrs. Grant by talking in a wonderfully bright and interesting way of what he had heard or seen, often reading to them out of his favorite books, of which he had several in his valise. His visit was a delight to the whole household, and general gloom reigned when he took his departure. Before going, he in some measure mitigated the sorrow Donald took no pains to conceal, by saying to him:

"You must stay with me when you come up to attend

the university. I am keeping bachelor's hall in my uncle's house, which is now my own, you know, and I think I will be able to make you tolerably comfortable. In the meantime, Donald, for fear you should forget me, I am going to send you a batch of books and magazines now and then. You will enjoy them, I know."

Enjoy them! Little fear of his failing to do that, when his heart fairly hungered for just such things; and whatever Mr. Munroe sent would be sure to be good. He thanked his kind and thoughtful friend over and over again, and assured him that he would make good use of his benefactions.

Mr. Munroe did not forget his promise when he returned to Chebucto. Thenceforward, every week there was a parcel in the mail bag for Donald, containing a magazine or two, a couple of weekly periodicals, and sometimes a book; for the sender, having now little else to do, was an omnivorous reader, and loved to share the pleasures of literature with those whom he knew would appreciate them.

At an early opportunity after his decision to undertake the Rivervale school, Donald made it known to Mr. Patterson. He felt bound to do this because he had given the head master to understand that he was going up to the university that autumn, and he considered that he was entitled to know of his change of plan. Much to his surprise, Mr. Patterson, instead of expressing sympathy and regret as he had expected, congratulated him upon having so easily and promptly obtained a position.

“It will be the best thing in the world for you, Donald,” said he, heartily, laying his hand upon his shoulder. “Two years of teaching now will, in the end, be actually better for you than two years of study, because the experience will be of inestimable value to you all through life. I have often wished that I had stopped in the middle of my college course and taught for a year or two before going on to complete it. I am sure I would be a better teacher to-day if I had done so; and in your case, Donald, whether it be your purpose to take up a profession, or to become a professor, or to enter into the ministry, when you look back upon the years spent in the River-vale school, I am sure you will never have reason to consider them wasted. But, of course, you must keep up your studies,” he went on to say; “you cannot afford to let them lie in abeyance, and now I will tell you what I will do. I am deeply interested in you, for you proved yourself one of the best pupils I have had at the academy; and I am anxious that when you do go to the university, you shall go as thoroughly prepared as possible. So I am going to make you an offer which I hope you will be able to accept, and it is this: You and I, after the holidays, will both be teaching every day in the week except Saturday. That day is our own. Now, how would you like to come into my study every Saturday morning, and spend a couple of hours going over with me the studies that are necessary to fit you for the university. I am thoroughly familiar with the curriculum. Chebucto is my Alma Mater, you know, and for my part I will

really enjoy going over the work with you. Now then, Donald, what do you say?"

Donald had been listening with breathless attention, and a face of growing wonder and delight. Was ever a boy so fortunate in his friends, so manifestly favored? What else could he say to such an offer than to accept it most gladly, and to try to express as best he could the fervent gratitude he felt.

He came away from Mr. Patterson feeling himself to be one of the luckiest young fellows in the world, and full of a noble determination to show himself not unworthy the interest and confidence of such friends and benefactors as Mr. Munroe and Mr. Patterson. In this spirit he entered upon his duties as teacher of the River-vale school, which reopened after the holidays on the first day of September.

His feelings, as he sat at his desk and watched the old scholars dropping into their accustomed places, and the new scholars shyly taking their seats wherever they could find a vacancy, cannot be easily described. He fully realized that he was about to be put on trial as he had never been in his life before. He was not concerned as to the sufficiency of his knowledge. He knew well enough that the utmost requirements of his position in that direction would fall far short of his own attainments, for there would be no demand for anything more than the mere rudiments of education.

But he was concerned, and very deeply concerned, with regard to his knowledge and command of himself, as dis-

tinguished from his knowledge and command of the subjects to be taught. All the objections to his undertaking the charge which had come into his mind when his father first suggested it, now returned in full force; and in spite of the encouragement he had received from Mr. Munroe and Mr. Patterson, and the new strength with which they had inspired him, his heart felt cold and heavy as lead. If only he were among strangers the problem would not be one-half so embarrassing. Their judgment would be far more lenient, their expectations far less difficult to satisfy, than those of the people among whom he had been born and bred.

In twos and threes, the boys and girls over whose intellectual development he was to preside for the next two years came in and distributed themselves over the school-room. Having nothing else to do, they, with one consent, devoted themselves to a minute inspection of their new teacher, and to the exchange of whispered comments concerning him, all of which could hardly be expected to tend toward allaying his mental perturbation.

Prompt to the minute of the time for opening, however, with an admirably assumed expression of entire unconcern, he touched the bell before him and called the school to order. Perfect silence having been obtained, he read a few verses from the Bible, and followed them with a brief prayer which he had carefully prepared beforehand, and which he intended to use every morning while he taught there.

To the reading of the Bible the scholars were accus-

tomed ; but the prayer was an innovation that quite surprised them at first. They exchanged glances of inquiry and, in some cases, of amusement. But Donald saw nothing of this. His eyes were reverently closed, and his tone was so devout and earnest that before the prayer ended all the inattentive ones were behaving as they ought. He had overcome them by his sheer sincerity.

When the school really settled down to work, as it did in the course of a day or two, he was glad to find the undertaking concerning which he had entertained so many apprehensions far less formidable than he had imagined. The school consisted of about forty boys and girls, the latter being in the majority, as the harvest season had not yet ended ; and there were some boys at home helping their fathers, who would come to the school when the crops were all safely garnered and they could be spared from the farm. Of those then present before him, all were at least two years younger than himself. In addition, then, to the dignity of his position and superior attainments, he had a further advantage in age, which would, of course, be helpful in maintaining discipline.

But this advantage he had reason to believe would not be his very long. The maintaining of the school through the winter, it was fully expected, would make some change in its constituency, as at that time of year there was always at home a number of young men who spent the summer upon the salt water, fishing or trading along the coast ; and the trustees counted upon some of these taking

advantage of the school to add to their scanty stock of learning.

Donald did not look forward to the advent of these possible pupils with any degree of pleasure. They were certain to be rough, uncouth, and no less difficult to keep in order than to teach. They were certain, he believed, to cause trouble in some way before he could hope to get them under control, and he heartily wished that they would not turn up at all. As will presently appear, his apprehensions of trouble were not ill-founded.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PROPHET IN HIS OWN COUNTRY.

AS soon as Donald came to know his scholars sufficiently well to obtain a good idea of their relative proficiency and capabilities, he set about a careful classification of them according to what he conceived to be the actual standing of each scholar. In the carrying out of this he, so to speak, struck his first sand bank.

His immediate predecessor had been one of that easy-going sort of people who never face a difficulty if they can possibly avoid it, and whose idea of life is to move along with as little friction as possible. He had, accordingly, allowed the scholars to assort themselves into classes pretty much after their own preferences; an arrangement which they highly appreciated and which they were very loth to abandon. When, therefore, Donald, quickly recognizing the impossibility of having anything like satisfactory work done so long as such an absurd condition of things was suffered to exist, set about the establishment of affairs upon a proper basis, he came at once face to face with the difficulties that meet all reformers. The scholars felt that he was interfering with a vested interest, and met his directions, not with disobedience or outspoken protest, but with a certain submissive hostility that troubled him very deeply.

His hope and purpose was to win not only the respect, but the affection of his scholars, and here, at the very outset, he was stirring up a spirit of opposition that would no doubt be difficult to allay again. Yet he had no alternative other than the arrangement of the classes, if he would achieve any satisfactory results in his work; and never in his life was he more determined about anything than that as a teacher he would be at least as successful as he had been as a student. Go right ahead he must, therefore, whatever the consequences.

By the end of a fortnight the various changes necessary were all completed, and the machinery of the school was working with admirable regularity and apparent smoothness. Although much the youngest teacher who had ever accepted the position, Donald bore himself in a way that effectually prevented any liberties being taken with him. His keen consciousness of the difficulties of his situation imparted a serious air to him that greatly impressed the very ones whose presence he feared would most likely lead to complications, to wit: the high-spirited Charlie and the merry little mischiefs, Bob and Harry. However good comrades they and Donald might be at home and in play, when once they were within the walls of the schoolroom he seemed to them somehow an altogether different individual, and they were little disposed to presume upon their relationship. In regard to Charlie, moreover, Donald had taken a step that spoke volumes for his natural sagacity. He admitted him sufficiently into his confidence to enable him to appreciate

one trying nature of his post, and then appealed to him to help him all that he could by setting the other boys an example in regard to well-prepared lessons and perfect behavior.

The appeal was entirely successful. It touched the right chord in Charlie's breast, and he responded with a warmth of good intention, the sincerity of which was not to be mistaken. Better still, he kept his promise as well as one with a volatile nature like his could reasonably be expected to do, and proved himself very helpful to his brother in the very way the latter wished.

In the performance of his duties Donald kept both Mr. McLeod—whom he had by no means forgotten—and Mr. Munroe before him as models for his guidance. The two chief principles that he set for himself were these: first, to tell his scholars nothing that they could tell him, to make them do their own thinking, and to teach them to like to do it themselves instead of having it done for them; and second, to make as little use of the rod as possible. The resort to brute force, except in extreme cases, seemed to him a confession of failure. He had not forgotten—he never would forget—his struggle with the teacher who had beaten him black and blue; and the memory of his contempt for the man who knew no better way of proving himself right than by blows remained with him as a warning against his falling into the same grievous error.

It was not unnatural that his evident reluctance to resort to physical punishment as a means of securing

obedience should be at first misunderstood by the scholars. They were too slow of comprehension to perceive his purpose to introduce and stand by a better way, and they misconstrued his so doing into a lack of courage on his part. Donald soon observed this, and it shook his resolution not a little. But a discussion of the subject with Mr. Patterson, with whom he had talked over his experience every Saturday at their morning meeting, confirmed him in his purpose to persevere, and he went on steadfastly.

So far as he was himself concerned, it would have been much easier when punishment was merited to administer a proper number of blows, and thus end the matter; for the penalties he inflicted he had himself in part, at least, to share, his method being to appoint the culprit a certain task, and then to keep him in after school until it was performed. This, of course, meant his staying in also, which was not at all to his liking; for at the end of the long session he usually felt quite as eager to get out into the open air as any of the scholars. But this undesirable feature of his system he accepted as inevitable, and found some compensation in employing the time upon his own studies.

Upon the whole, the days slipped by very smoothly. The opposition aroused by the re-classification seemed to have entirely subsided again, and despite occasional struggles with some particularly dull or obstinate scholar, Donald found little to justify the apprehensions of difficulty which had weighed so heavily upon his heart three

months before. Mr. Patterson's counsel was of inestimable value to him. At their weekly meeting their first business was, of course, the work that Donald was doing in preparation for the university. After spending an hour or more at this, Mr. Patterson would then push the books aside, saying: "That will do for this morning. You are making excellent progress, Donald. You will certainly be able to enter the second year at once, which will be a great advantage. Come now, let us hear how the Rivervale school is getting on."

Whereupon Donald would proceed to relate whatever of interest had occurred during the week, and Mr. Patterson would comment freely upon his report, giving him the benefit of his experience upon all points concerning which Donald sought his counsel. The advice he gave was always faithfully followed. His former pupil had the utmost confidence in his wisdom, and Mr. Patterson was thus enabled to have put into practice certain theories as to the best methods of elementary education which in his own position he could not apply. The arrangement was therefore mutually advantageous, and the head master was very well pleased to hear from Donald, week by week, hopeful accounts of the condition of the school.

In this pleasant fashion matters went on until late in November, and then Donald was called upon to face the first real crisis in his career as a schoolmaster. This was brought about by the advent of the big boys, who were away from home all summer and only spent their winters at Rivervale. They made their appearance one by one.

until there were six of them in all, for the most part awkward, overgrown youths. They were as full of conceit as they were empty of knowledge, and no less lacking in manners than in serious purpose to benefit by the school. The truth of the matter was that they came not to learn, but to have some fun out of it. They had nothing to occupy their time until spring, and as the master of all mischief is ever ready to find employment for idle hands, these lounging fellows took it into their heads to see whether they could not make the school supply them with amusement for the winter. They were all as old or older than Donald, and, with one exception, his superiors in height and strength; and they had entered into a solemn league with one another that under no circumstances would they submit to punishment from the "young kid of a teacher," as they called him; if necessary, combining to prevent him from enforcing the penalties he might impose.

An especial relish was imparted to their proposed amusement by the fact of Donald's youth and of his belonging to the settlement. They did not live at the crossroads nor in the immediate neighborhood. Their homes were on what was known as the Harbor Road; and there never had been any great degree of cordiality between the Rivervale folk and those of Harbor. They had the right to attend the school, however. Indeed, as has been already mentioned, their presence was counted upon by the trustees, and the desire to do them some good was one of the causes that led to the school being continued through the winter.

Donald regarded his new pupils with a good deal of inward trepidation. He was conscious that although the current of affairs had been running with gratifying smoothness for some time past, there nevertheless existed in the school a latent spirit of antagonism that only wanted leadership to manifest itself openly ; and he had good reason to apprehend that this leadership would be supplied by the Harbor boys at the first opportunity. They had made no secret of their intention to "bullyrag the youngster," as they expressed it, and this, of course, had not been long in reaching his ears.

But not a sign of his anxiety did he betray to any one. His fixed determination was, whatever might happen, to face the contest alone, and to ask help from no one unless matters went utterly beyond his control. He knew, of course, that an appeal to the trustees would remove the difficulty at once, as the Harbor boys would be forbidden the school. That, however, was the very thing he wished to avoid. His hope and desire was not only to win over the disturbing element to the side of order, but to do these rough, uncultivated lads who had had so few chances of improvement, some positive good. To have them banished from the school in the event of their attempting to carry out their foolish boasts would be a hollow victory. But to keep them in the school, to enlist their interest, to awaken their ambition, and perhaps to gain their good opinion and liking, that would be a triumph well worth much prudence, patience, and steadfast self-control ; and to the accomplishment of this end

Donald, not forgetting to seek divine blessing and guidance, resolutely applied himself.

During the first week of the presence of the Harbor boys in the school, nothing out of the ordinary course of things occurred, although Donald did not fail to notice a certain half-suppressed restlessness among the other boys at times, that showed there was a general expectancy of something exciting being in the air. Donald took care to assign his big scholars seats where they would be right under his eye, and to keep them as far apart as possible. They obeyed all his directions with reasonable promptness, and made tolerable efforts to master the none-too-difficult lessons he set them. To be sure, their answers at times were so ludicrously inaccurate that it seemed as if they were thus intended, in order to turn the proceedings into a kind of farce. But Donald, keeping both his risible faculties and his temper well under control, never for a moment evinced that he suspected anything of the kind. With unfailing courtesy and patience he corrected their errors, apparently sympathizing from the bottom of his heart with his scholars' bungling attempts.

The leader of the Harbor Road party was Angus Gillis, a tall, lank, raw-boned, red-haired, freckle-faced fellow, whose otherwise expressionless countenance was at times lit up by a cunning leer that showed he was by no means so stupid as, for some hidden reason, he pretended to be. The way in which he mangled the simple lessons assigned him would certainly have provoked the

majority of teachers either to contemptuous laughter or indignant wrath, and if Donald had not been so fully on his guard he would without doubt have given way in one direction or the other.

But in spite of many temptations, he restrained himself with admirable self-control until at length, one day, Angus, who evidently thought it was time to begin to "bully the youngster," not content with making a fool of himself, undertook to make a fool of the schoolmaster also.

The spelling class was ranged before the desk, Angus in his usual place at the foot. The other scholars had answered satisfactorily, but when Donald came to Angus he detected signs of that leer of low cunning which was an augury of trouble. The word given out was a rather difficult one as it happened, being "manslaughter."

Donald pronounced it slowly, and distinctly enough to be heard down at the door. But Angus, assuming an expression of blankest stupidity, put his hand to his ear, and bending his head forward, ejaculated:

"Eh?"

The tone was utterly wanting in respect, and for an instant a dangerous light flashed in the teacher's dark eyes. Controlling himself, however, he fixed his gaze upon Gillis until the latter's eyes sullenly dropped, and then said, in a clear, steady voice:

"The word, Angus, is *manslaughter*."

It would have been the height of folly and falseness for Angus to pretend that he did not hear this time, so

with a sort of grunt that might be interpreted as an assenting "Oh!" he hung his head in an attitude of profound cogitation, and putting his right hand up to his coarse red locks, proceeded to tug at them as though he hoped in that way to stimulate his dull brain. He looked so completely bewildered that the class, all of whose members knew well enough that he could spell the word aright if he chose, broke out into an audible laugh which Donald promptly quelled by a sharp command of "Silence!"

At last inspiration seemed to come to Angus. He lifted his tousled head, and with an expression whose gleam of malicious intelligence made his ridiculous answer all the more aggravating, doled out his reply after this fashion:

"M-a-n man," then a sigh of relief, and a long pause as if to get breath for the remainder, "s-l-o-r slor, manslor, t-a-r tar, manslortar."

A burst of laughter that could not be controlled came from the class, and Angus, with a triumphant grin, looked boldly into his teacher's face. Donald realized that the crisis had come, and set his teeth for the inevitable struggle.

CHAPTER X.

THE TURNING OF THE TIDE.

STRIDING swiftly across the platform until he confronted Angus in his ignominious position at the foot of the class, Donald drew himself up, his arms straight and stiff at his sides, his hands clenched tightly, and his whole appearance so like that of one ready to spring and strike without further warning, that the big fellow, whose height almost equalled Donald's although he had the advantage of the platform, shrank back out of reach and threw up his arms in a gesture of defense.

Ignoring this movement as though it had not been made, the young teacher, fixing his flashing eyes upon the now rather dismayed scholar, said in the sternest tone he could command: "Once more—spell 'man-slaughter.'"

There was perfect silence in the room as Angus, still keeping behind the line and evidently in a very confused state of mind, endeavored in earnest to spell the word correctly. But although he could have done it easily enough under ordinary circumstances, he was by this time so demoralized that he could not get the right letters into their proper order. He tried again and again, each effort being wider of the mark than the preceding one, until at last Donald, seeing that it was hopeless to attempt to get

anything better from him then, said, without relaxing the sternness of his tone: "That will do. You need not try again. Come up here."

For a moment Angus looked as if he would not obey, but as Donald made a movement as though to lay hands upon him, he changed his mind and sullenly stepped forward.

"Here," directed Donald, putting a spelling book in his hands opened at the lesson for the day, "take this and stand back there against the wall until you have learned your lesson."

Angus cast a quick glance around the room, seeking to find in the faces of his companions from the Harbor Road signs of sympathy that would encourage him to break out in open revolt. But so prompt and energetic had been Donald's action, and so commanding was his appearance as he stood beside the desk, that not one of them dared so much as return the look. Disappointed and downcast, Angus then crawled reluctantly to the place pointed out, and sought to hide his confusion by pretending to be absorbed in the book he held, his heart all the while burning with suppressed rage and his brain busy with thoughts of revenge.

Donald dismissed the class, and for some time did not call up another. He felt quite certain that although to all appearances he had gained the day, the advantage was not permanent. Neither Angus Gillis nor the Harbor Road faction he headed was to be so easily disposed of as that. But just what would be the next happening and

how he would meet it were questions that possessed his thoughts to the exclusion of everything else. He felt that he could not teach while in this frame of mind. He must wait until he knew whether or not there was more trouble to come.

As it turned out, he had not to wait long. Glancing up from the book he was pretending to read, he caught the scholars in the midst of a stealthy smile of amusement at something being done behind his back. His first impulse was to wheel about and discover the cause, but a better plan the next instant suggested itself. Affecting not to have noticed what was going on, he bent over his book again until, looking out from under his eyebrows, he again caught the smile spreading through the rows of scholars. Then, like a flash, he swung around in his chair and was face to face with Gillis. So swift and unexpected was the movement that it caught the latter red-handed, so to speak. Having recovered from his first rebuff, he had been endeavoring to express his contempt for the young teacher, as well as his intention to get even with him, by making hideous grimaces behind his back, accompanied by a vigorous shaking of fists and other demonstrations of hostile intent. While in the very midst of this proceeding, Donald had turned upon him. For the first moment he continued the grimace, although his clenched fist dropped nervously to his side. Then Donald's voice made him jump, as the command fell on his ears: "Hold out your hand!"

The young teacher realized that the time for decision

had come. Further parleying was out of the question. Gillis must be conquered on the spot, or his authority would be seriously impaired. Shortly after taking the school he had made a change in the instrument of punishment. This had been a stout cane, which the teacher applied to the hands or back of the culprit as he saw fit. Donald did not like the cane. He thought it savored too much of cruelty; so he had banished it, adopting in its place a leather taws-strap that seemed to him a much more humane weapon to wield. He held this in his hand now, and taking one step toward Angus, he swung it over his shoulder as he repeated his command: "Hold out your hand!"

Mechanically Angus obeyed, his eyes fastened on Donald with a look in which fear and rage were strangely blended; but ere the blow could fall, he withdrew his hand again and put it behind his back. The strap swished futilely through the air until it struck full upon Donald, without, however, doing him much hurt. Instantly he swung it aloft again. "Hold out your hand!" he thundered.

Angus brought his hands out from behind his back, but it was not in order to render obedience. Instead of extending one, as commanded to do, he gathered himself together, and with a sudden rush attempted to charge past Donald down into the body of the room, where the other scholars were watching the struggle between master and pupil with breathless interest.

The movement was a remarkably quick one for so

clumsy a lad, yet it did not take Donald unawares. He had, in fact, anticipated some such action, and was better prepared for it than Angus imagined. Seizing him firmly by the collar of his coat, he brought him to a sudden stop, and then, in a quieter tone than that in which he had last spoken, said: "Go back to your place, Angus, and hold out your hand."

But Angus's evil spirit had now full possession of him, overcoming all respect for his teacher, all fear for himself, all care for the consequences of such open defiance of orders. His face was red with rage, his ordinarily dull eyes flashed with fury, and he replied to the command by a volley of oaths and a violent attempt to break loose.

Now Donald's delight in athletic exercises has been already referred to, as well as the proficiency he had acquired in them. His favorite amusement was wrestling. During his last year at the academy there was not a boy there whom he could not throw on short notice. Not content with the skill obtained by practicing on his schoolmates, he had sought out the champion wrestler of the county and persuaded him to initiate him into some of his pet devices, until he became almost as expert as his instructor. This accomplishment was now going to stand him in good stead. The instant Angus endeavored to wrench himself free, Donald exclaimed: "No, no, Angus, you shall not do that," and threw his strong arms about him and gained just the hold he wanted.

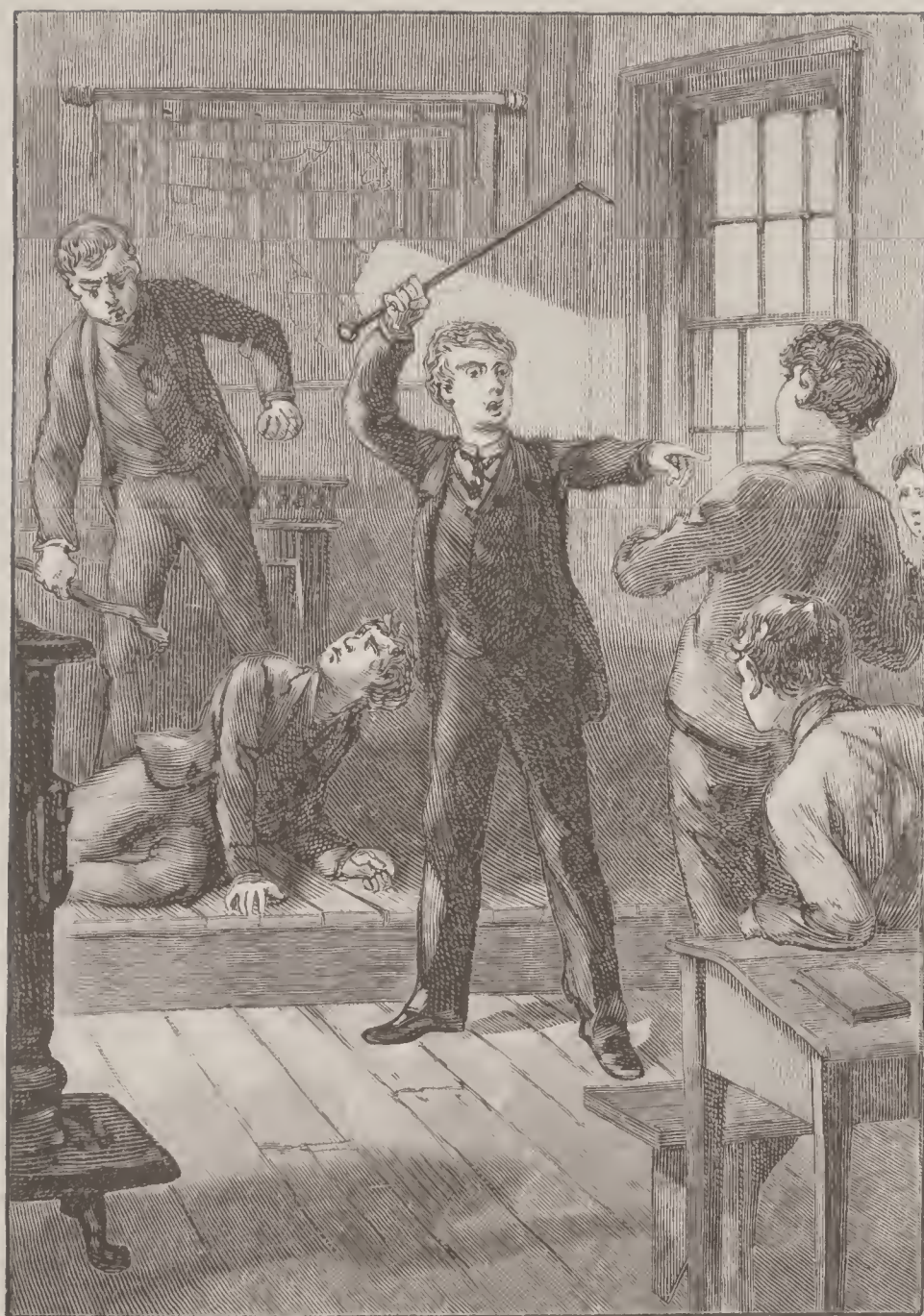
Then there was a sharp struggle, for Angus, though

loosely built and clumsy, had muscles toughened by hard work on board ship; and he put forth his utmost efforts to extricate himself from Donald's grip of steel. But he strove in vain. He was in the grasp of an expert wrestler, while he knew little or nothing of the art; and all at once, just when he thought he was gaining ground, his knees were doubled under him, his shoulders pressed backward, and down he went in a helpless heap upon the platform.

As he fell, one of his companions sprang from his seat with the evident intention of rushing to his assistance; but with the quickness of a panther, Charlie, who had been an impatient spectator of the struggle, and consumed with longing to take part, but afraid to do so until called upon, sprang from his seat also; and seizing the heavy iron poker that lay beside the stove, swung it menacingly in the air, crying: "Go back to your seat, Rory, or I'll break your head with this."

Rory did not attempt to parley. Back into his seat he dropped, while Charlie, now feeling that he had ample justification for decisive action, took up a position in the central aisle where he could command all the Harbor Road boys, and holding his dangerous weapon ready to strike, effectually shut off all chance of interference on the part of Angus's sympathizers.

In the meantime Donald, standing over Angus a little out of breath, but entirely master of himself, addressed the discomfited boy in a quiet yet firm voice, saying: "Come now, Angus, that is enough foolishness for once.



Donald Grant.

Pick yourself up and go back to your place until I send you to your seat. I will consider the trouble you have just had sufficient punishment if you will behave yourself."

Glad to be let off so easily, for he had fully expected that Donald would seize the opportunity to administer a good thrashing while he was at his mercy, Gillis scrambled to his feet, picking up his book as he did so, and went back to the spot where he had been put at first. For the time being, at all events, he was completely subdued. He recognized Donald not only as his teacher, but as his master, and had no more desire to try conclusions with him.

When he resumed his position, Charlie, seeing that there would be no further need for his services, quietly returned the poker to its place and slipped into his seat, not unobserved by his brother, who wondered a little what it all meant, but wisely postponed inquiry until school should be over.

There was a general gasp of relief from the school on order being thus restored. Many of the scholars had been very anxious lest some harm should be done their teacher, while others felt a similar anxiety concerning Angus. All were correspondingly glad when the struggle came to an end without either being injured; for beyond a good shaking, Angus was little the worse for his fall.

For the next quarter of an hour there was almost perfect silence in the room. Then having completely

recovered his self-control and thought out carefully just what he would say, Donald turned to Angus. "You may go back to your seat now," said he.

The big fellow obeyed with great alacrity, something like a smile spreading over his countenance as he dropped heavily into his place.

"Will you please all give me your attention, scholars?" continued Donald. "I want to have a little talk with you this afternoon before I dismiss the school."

With faces full of curiosity, the boys and girls sat up on the benches in an attitude of the keenest attention. Donald then rose from the chair, and, standing beside his desk, addressed them as follows: "I am not surprised at what has happened to-day, for I have been expecting something of the kind. Maybe some of you have too." And here he gave a meaning glance at the Harbor Road boys. "Nor am I altogether sorry; for I believe it will not occur again. Now I want to ask you a few questions, and I want you to answer them promptly and frankly. Have I ever been unfair or unjust to any of you, or have I seemed to show any favoritism?"

There was a momentary pause, each scholar waiting for some other to lead off in answering, and then all at once came a chorus of "No, sir. No, sir."

"Have I treated any of you harshly?" continued Donald. "Have I been too severe in punishing any of you?"

Again the chorus of negatives.

"Don't you think I have done my best to be a faithful

teacher and to help you to learn your lessons, so that you might get the most good possible from the school?"

"Yes, sir; indeed you have, sir," was the hearty response.

"Well, then, scholars,"—and now the speaker's tone changed from one of inquiry to affectionate appeal,—“do you think it is treating me in a kind or fair way, when I have done my very best for you, to turn upon me and try to do me harm? I know some of you did not like my rearranging the classes a little while ago, but you must all see now that it was the right thing to do, and that the work has gone on ever so much better for it. I know too, that some of you think me too young for a teacher; but if I can teach you as much as you can learn, what matter is it how young I may be? I do want, scholars, that we should thoroughly understand each other. I am anxious and determined to do the very best I can for you all while I am your teacher. Isn't it only fair and reasonable that you should do the best for me? I am sure I take no pleasure in finding fault with you or imposing punishment. I would be only too glad if I never had to punish at all; and I want you from this out to try to help me have as little punishing as possible. Will you promise?"

There was no mistaking the heartiness of the response. Donald's gallant bearing in his contest with Angus Gillis, his magnanimous treatment of him after he had brought him to submission, and the sincere, engaging way in which he now spoke, had completely captured his scholars'

hearts. They were quite ready to spring to their feet and cheer for him if they had been asked to do so; and in answer to his question they shouted back a unanimous "Yes, sir, we'll promise," that delighted their teacher's heart. His face glowed with pleasure as he surveyed their beaming countenances, and there was a noticeable tremor in his voice as he went on to say: "Thank you for that answer, scholars. I will try to show you how grateful I am for it. You are all dismissed now." And he resumed his seat while the scholars, with much noise and bustle, hastened out into the open air, where they gathered in groups to talk over the exciting events of the day.

The Harbor Road lads at once set off for their homes. They had much to say to one another about what had occurred, and what they thought of the young teacher who had proved himself so much wiser and stronger than they had expected. Rory Chesholm, the one Charlie had sent back to his seat at the point of the poker, was for making another trial at getting the upper hand of the schoolmaster; but, strange to say, no one opposed the idea more stoutly than Angus. Donald's wise leniency had affected him more than his skill in wrestling. Admiration, which would soon become liking, had taken the place of his unreasonable prejudice. From an enemy he was ready to become a friend, and he would not listen to any suggestion of further misbehavior; so that it was evident that Donald was not likely to have any more trouble from the "Harbor Road gang" while he was its leader.

CHAPTER XI.

A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT.

MR. PATTERSON was greatly interested by Donald's graphic description of his encounter with Angus Gillis and its satisfactory termination, when he heard it the following Saturday morning.

"I think you showed most excellent judgment through it all, Donald," said he. "Really I could not have done better myself, old hand at teaching as I am. You certainly have more than an ordinary share of sagacity, and a positive genius for government. I predict for you a brilliant career in any line of life that especially calls for those qualities."

Donald blushed with pleasure at this praise, which was evidently no empty compliment, but entirely sincere.

"It is very kind of you to say that," he replied, "and it is a great encouragement to me. I do want to win success as a teacher, and I am anxious that my scholars should not only respect me, but really like me too, just as I did Mr. McLeod and Mr. Munroe."

"By the way, Donald, that reminds me of an idea I have had in mind for some time past," said Mr. Patterson. "Did you ever think of trying to entertain your scholars a little?"

"Entertain them, sir!" exclaimed Donald, in a tone

of surprise. "I never thought of such a thing. It seemed to me my only business was to teach them."

"That is your chief business, certainly," returned Mr. Patterson. "But do you know, I believe you might undertake to entertain them also with advantage both to yourself and them."

Then, seeing that Donald was very much in the dark as to his meaning, he went on to explain himself: "I will tell you what I am driving at. You are very fond of reading, and you frequently receive books and magazines from your good friend, Mr. Munroe. Now, don't you think that you could find in those books and magazines many things that your scholars would be very glad to listen to, if you were to read to them in an interesting way?"

Donald caught the idea at once. The look of wondering inquiry that had been on his face at first changed to one of understanding and assent.

"Why, of course I could, Mr. Patterson," he cried, bringing his hand down upon his knee with an emphatic slap. "That is a grand notion. If they will only listen attentively, I will like reading to them well enough."

"Never fear but that they will listen, Donald," answered Mr. Patterson. "I used to do it in a school I taught long ago, and the scholars' attention never flagged. They all enjoyed the reading greatly, and I dare say it did some of them as much good as the teaching."

It was not Donald's way to put off the doing of anything upon which he had decided. Consequently, that

very night he looked through the stock of literature in his room and got ready to give Mr. Patterson's suggestion a fair trial, being himself, it must be confessed, a little doubtful as to whether the Rivervale scholars would appreciate the attractions of the kind of literature he preferred.

On the following Monday afternoon, half an hour before the time for closing the school, he told them to put away their work as he wanted to speak to them about something. They, naturally enough, expected some further reference to the trouble of the preceding week, and were no less relieved than pleased when his communication proved to be of an entirely different character.

Very much to his gratification, they received his proposal to read and talk with them for half an hour each afternoon with every mark of sincere pleasure. Even the Harbor Road boys brightened up as the matter was explained to them. No doubt they had somewhat different notions as to what would be read from those that were in Donald's mind, but this mattered little. So long as they were eager for reading, Donald trusted that he could enlist their interest and make them enjoy what he had selected, almost, if not quite, as much as if they had chosen it themselves.

The success of the innovation was unqualified. Before it had been in operation a fortnight, the scholars had learned so to look for the afternoon reading and to enjoy it, that Donald had only to threaten to suspend it to obtain perfect order in event of disturbing noises or to

quell instantly the slightest manifestation of insubordination.

Not only so, but it became a more powerful implement of discipline than the strap; for, as he had given the scholars distinctly to understand at the start, the reading was dependent upon their good behavior and their being attentive to their lessons. They had to earn it, so to speak. Consequently, when once they came to deem it a positive treat, they all, with one accord, took more pains to prepare their lessons carefully and to behave well than they had ever done before.

"You never gave me a better bit of advice than that, Mr. Patterson," said Donald, after reporting to him how admirably the experiment had succeeded. "It is a positive pleasure to myself as well as the scholars; for they evidently enjoy it with all their hearts, and they ask such funny questions, sometimes, that you would be greatly amused if you could overhear them. Of course, I never laugh at their questions, however ridiculous they may be. I encourage them to ask about whatever is not clear to them."

"That is the idea, Donald," answered Mr. Patterson. "Encourage them to ask. It stimulates their thinking powers. I am wonderfully pleased at my suggestion turning out so well. I felt sure it would if fairly tried, and I knew you would not fail to give it a fair trial."

The success of the reading not only exceeded Donald's expectations, but even his desires. Its fame spread beyond the bounds of the school. The boys and girls who

listened with such interest to tales of travel and adventure, to descriptions of foreign countries and peoples, to accounts of new inventions, to chosen passages from the poets, of course went home and told their parents how delightful it all was, with the result that ere long some of the parents became fired with a desire to be present during that last half-hour of the session. Several of them approached Donald and preferred their request for permission to share the privileges their children were enjoying.

Donald was a good deal surprised at first. He had not contemplated anything more than combining amusement with instruction for the benefit of his scholars; and the idea of having a number of old folks added to his hearers did not strike him favorably. He consulted his father and mother about it. They at once supported the request.

"Why should you refuse it, Donald dear?" said Mrs. Grant. "You would not refuse a hungry man food if you had it to give him. These people are hungry for brain food, and you have it ready for them. I am sure you need not make the slightest difference in what you read on their account. They will enjoy what the scholars enjoy. My opinion is that you would not be doing right to say 'no' to them. Don't you think so, father?" turning to her husband.

"I do, most certainly," answered Mr. Grant. "You ought to feel highly complimented, Donald, at grown-up people wanting to come to your school. It proves that

the children must carry good accounts of you home, now doesn't it? And surely if that is so, you have not the heart to shut the door on those who are so eager to share in the benefits their children are receiving."

Donald smiled and shook his head in a way that implied he confessed defeat.

"There is no doubt you are both right and I am wrong," said he. "I was not looking at it in that way. I was just thinking what a pity it was when we were getting along so comfortably and quietly, to be disturbed by a lot of big people coming in. I never took into account that it might be perhaps as much of a pleasure to them as it seems to be to the scholars. I will give it a trial, anyway, and if it works all right they can come as long as they please."

So the following day he gave it out in school that any of the parents of the scholars who wished to be present at the reading would be welcome, and with a good deal of curiosity awaited the response that would be made. The next afternoon just before three o'clock, the regular time for dismissal being half an hour later, some half-dozen men and women stepped quietly into the room and took their seats on the vacant benches near the door. Donald greeted them with a pleasant bow, and without otherwise drawing attention to their presence, took up the reading precisely as if they were not there. He had no thought of making any change in the course marked out, for that would be to the disadvantage of the younger scholars, who might thus be left behind. He would

simply keep right on. If the new additions to the school liked what they heard and found it worth coming from their homes to hear, well and good; if they did not, they need only cease to come, and matters would be just where they were before they had preferred their request for permission to be present. At the same time, Donald, naturally enough, having agreed to their coming was desirous that they should be in no hurry to go again. He was hardly less eager to hold them than if he had invited them to come.

The reading class in its enlarged form proved a no less gratifying success than when it was confined to the school. Day by day the number of the grown-up folk increased, until the spare benches could hold no more and they had to sit in among the scholars. Some days, indeed, so many came that the men would have to stand, in order that all the women might be seated.

Not only was the attendance large, but the interest and attention was all that Donald could desire. Glad, indeed, would poor old Dr. Sternhold have been to meet such an appreciative, absorbed audience on Sunday as Donald had five afternoons in the week all through the winter. Many of those men and women in all their lives had had little other reading than the local newspaper,—an exceedingly poor affair of its kind,—and the Bible, if they were Protestants; while if they were Roman Catholics—as many of them were—they had had no reading at all, for the simple reason that they did not know how to read.

The stories and articles they heard from Donald's lips, interspersed as they were with bright bits of comment or helpful explanation, opened a new world to them. The horizons of their narrow lives were extended as they could not have imagined before. They took home with them for discussion at their fireside new thoughts and ideas that gave them something better to talk about than the meaningless incidents of their dull daily life.

Among those who came were big Grant, the blacksmith, and his portly wife. They had no children in their home; but they had begged to be allowed to join the others, and of course Donald made no objection. Although Mr. Grant spoke only for himself, he really voiced the general feeling when he said to the young teacher one day: "You are doing us a great deal of good, Donald, more, perhaps, than you have any idea of; for you are teaching us to think, and some of us needed a lesson of that kind pretty badly. Now just look at that Jake Gillis," referring to the father of the lad who had given Donald so much trouble; a great, rough man with the head of a bull and much the same sort of voice,—a kind of local bully, in fact,—who, nevertheless, a week after the reading had been thrown open, made his way bashfully in one afternoon and never missed a day subsequently. "There is a man who maybe never thought much about anything outside of his own coarse desires and commonplace concerns. But you have set him thinking just as you have us who ought to have been improving our minds all the time they were lying

fallow for want of seed. Gillis thinks you are a perfect wonder. Every word you say is gospel to him. If his Angus were to attempt to give you any trouble now he would take his ox-whip to him. You will never know, Donald, how much good you are doing. My wife and I get impatient waiting for three o'clock to come. I hope when you give up the school you will make your successor promise to keep up the reading."

"I am afraid I can hardly guarantee that," returned Donald, smiling. "But I will gladly promise to do my best, for indeed I enjoy the reading class now myself more than any other part of the day's work. It is quite flattering to have so many people—nearly all as old as your own father and mother—listening to every word you utter, and always looking so interested."

In expressing himself thus Donald was not simply trying to say something pleasant: he was stating a fact; for although when first proposed he did not at all welcome the notion of having men and women added to his school, the result had been so entirely different from his expectations, and he had found the marked appreciation of his reading so gratifying, that he would now be very sorry to be without the grown-up folks of an afternoon. Their presence inspired him to more care in preparation and more vim in the presentation of what he had prepared.

"I am very glad I took your advice, father," said he to Mr. Grant one evening, as he came into the sitting-room from his own room, where he had been getting

ready for the next day's reading. "Whether I can do the parents of my scholars any good or not, I certainly am getting good from having them there. They make me pay a great deal more attention to what I am going to read. I make sure that I know the right meaning of all the big words and understand all the references to persons and places, so as to be ready for any question that may be asked ; and in that way I derive more benefit from it myself than I would if I had only the scholars to prepare for."

"Ah, Donald, my boy," answered Mr. Grant, his eyes fixed upon his son with a look of ineffable tenderness and pride, "you are learning one of the most precious lessons in life. 'The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.' You will find that in Proverbs—and in all that wonderful storehouse of wit and wisdom there are no truer words. You cannot help another without helping yourself at the same time."

"I never thought of it in that way before, father," said Donald, a happy light coming into his face as he spoke ; for his father's words gave him a great deal of pleasure. "I must honestly confess that I took a great deal more to heart the bother I imagined it would be to me, than any advantage it might be to them. But you have made me see things in a different light, and I am glad you have ; for I do want to be of some use in this world and help other people, just as Mr. Patterson and Mr. Munroe have been helping me."

“So long as you have the disposition to help, Donald,” returned Mr. Grant, “never fear that there will be lack of opportunity. I don’t want to flatter you, my son; but I cannot help telling you that God has given you more than ordinary talents for helping your fellows. Just as your playmates at school were always glad to let you be their leader and do your bidding, so will it be when you go out into the world. You will always find plenty willing to follow your lead. How careful you must be, then, Donald dear, to lead in the right direction—to help others upward and not downward!”

Donald’s face had grown very thoughtful while his father was speaking. The earnest, loving words of wisdom made a deep impression upon him, and he sat long in his own room that night pondering them over. The passage “for none of us liveth to himself,” came into his mind and brought him face to face with the great principle of responsibility for personal influence, which henceforward was to have a larger part in his life than it had had thus far.

CHAPTER XII

LEAVING THE NEST.

THE two years of Donald's service as teacher of the Rivervale school slipped by far more swiftly than he could have believed when, all impatient to be off to the university, he looked forward to them as a great chasm intervening between himself and the object of his desire, for the closing of which he wondered how he would ever manage to wait. He had no idea then of the compensation for the delay that he would find in his work, and of the inspiration that he would derive from the consciousness of his labor not being in vain.

There was but one opinion in Rivervale as to the merits of the "boy schoolmaster,"—to wit, that the school had never been better taught. So manifest were the admiration and respect with which not only the scholars, the Harbor Road boys not excepted, but their parents regarded him, that his head might have been turned were it not for the salutary counterbalancing influence of his high ambition. He, of course, found it very pleasant and gratifying to be so highly appreciated; but he clearly realized that the standards of Rivervale were little guide to those of Chebucto, and that even though he might be a triton among minnows at home, he would be only a minnow among tritons in the larger sphere. So in spite of much

adulation, he managed to keep his head reasonably level, thereby saving himself many a pang that would inevitably have been his in after days had he accepted the estimate of Rivervale.

During all the time his own studies had been faithfully carried on. Mr. Patterson's kind interest never flagged, and on very few Saturday mornings did Donald fail to present himself in his study, eager to talk over the work and experience of the week. Fortunate, indeed, was he in having such a friend and counsellor; and many a time in after life did his memory go gratefully back to those weekly meetings when everything within the range of his thought and feeling could be brought forth freely and frankly. Mr. Patterson was so sincere, so trustworthy a confidant.

The two years brought little change to the Grant home beyond making its members that much older. Hugh continued on his quiet faithful ways, an invaluable assistant to his father and a constant comfort to his mother. Charlie, having continued at school a year longer than he had intended, "just to back up my brother in case of another rumpus," he took pleasure in saying, when the second summer holidays ended Donald's term of service, hardly knew what to do with himself; and his parents were somewhat concerned on his behalf. The desire to go to sea had grown stronger as he grew older. Indeed, a less affectionate, home-loving boy would have gratified it long before by running away if necessary; but Charlie was too honest a lad and loved his mother and father

too well to play any such mean trick as that upon them.

Hitherto the fact of Donald being at home also had helped to keep his restless spirit in check ; but when the time of his favorite brother's going away to attend the university drew near, he made up his mind that he must take wing from the family nest also. To Donald he confided his resolution, and entreated his help in obtaining the parental sanction without which he did not want to put it into execution.

The two brothers had a long and affectionate talk together, the younger opening his heart to the elder as he had never done before ; and the result of it was that Donald felt convinced it would be better for Charlie to have his own way and make a trial of the sea at all events, than to be required to give up what was the ruling passion of his life.

"It is just this way," Charlie had said, speaking in his quick, earnest way ; "my heart is set upon going to sea just as yours is upon going to the university. Suppose father were to object now to your going to Chebucto. Wouldn't it make you feel miserable ? Well, it makes me just as miserable to have him object to my going to sea. I hate the shop. I detest farming. I am not fit to be a school-teacher, and if I am not allowed to be a sailor, I will not be good for anything. Now, mother and father think more of what you say than of all the rest of us put together ; and if you will only tell them that you think I am cut out for a sailor and will never be fit for any-

thing else, and that I had better be allowed to go to sea, they will not say another word against it."

"I am afraid you give me credit for having more influence over father and mother than is really the case, Charlie," said Donald, smiling at his brother's implied compliment. "But however that may be, whatever my opinion is worth, you shall have the benefit of it; for I am certain now that you ought to be allowed to have your wish in this matter. Perhaps after you have tried one voyage you will find it quite enough, and be glad to come back and settle down here or in the village. But, at any rate, you will evidently never be content until you have found it all out for yourself. So I will speak to father and mother, Charlie, and tell them what I think."

Charlie sprang up with glistening eyes and gave his brother a hearty hug. Then standing before him, he said in a tone of unusual gravity that bespoke the depth of his feeling: "Donald, if you get their consent I will promise you—I will take oath upon my Bible, if you like—to be just the same at sea as I would be at home. I will never touch a drop of liquor. I will never use an oath, and I will keep out of bad company all that I know how."

Donald put his hands upon the boy's shoulder, and looking right down into his eyes, said solemnly: "You need not swear to that upon your Bible, Charlie, for I know you mean it with all your heart. Let it be a covenant between us that may help you in time of temptation."

When Donald laid the matter before his parents he found them, as he had expected, not easy to convince. They both dreaded the sea because of the perils to which both body and soul were exposed upon it ; and only when he made it clear to them that by thwarting Charlie's desires they would in all probability either drive him into running away, or, failing that, take all the spirit out of him and spoil his whole life, did they very reluctantly give their consent to the boy having his way.

Very fervent was Charlie's gratitude ; and readily did he subscribe to all the promises his anxious mother would have him make, among them being one to the effect that no matter by what sort of people he might be surrounded, he would never, if at all possible, let a day pass without reading in his Bible and offering prayer to God.

A few weeks after this he bade good-bye to his home, the squire having been good enough to obtain a berth for him in one of his own ships then loading at a port some fifty miles distant ; whither he went, full of hope, to try his fortune in the great world that lies open to the adventurous mariner.

Not long after came Donald's time for departure ; and poor Mrs. Grant's heart was heavy at the thought of parting with him also, while he was no less eager for the university than Charlie had been for the ship. The matriculation examination did not take place until the latter part of October, but Mr. Munroe had thoughtfully invited him to come up a week beforehand in case he should find it necessary to put some finishing touches

upon his preparation for the ordeal. This invitation Donald gladly availed himself of; for despite his unremitting attention to his studies, he naturally felt a good deal of nervousness in the matter.

The journey to Chebucto was full of delightful novelty to him. First came the long ride by coach to New Edinburgh,—a very pleasant experience in the cool, bright autumn weather,—and then the run by train from New Edinburgh to Chebucto. Now this was Donald's first acquaintance with the railway, and he found it no easy task to maintain his self-composure in the presence of this modern marvel. He happened to be standing on the station platform when the train came thundering up, and, greatly to the amusement of the spectators, was so startled by its tremendous rush and roar that, dropping his portmanteau, he jumped back half a dozen feet and stood staring at the long line of cars in open-mouthed astonishment. But the next moment he had recovered his self-possession, and joining in the laugh his little demonstration had raised, he picked up his bag and followed the procession of passengers into the car, determined not to be betrayed into any such exhibition of "greenness" again if he could possibly help it. Yet as the train rolled smoothly and swiftly along, the novelty of the whole thing so aroused his curiosity that he could not keep his seat. He went from car to car until he had inspected the whole train. He asked as many questions of the conductor and brakeman as he thought their patience would stand. He even ventured to inquire if

he could possibly be permitted to ride in the cab with the driver for a while, and finally he managed to settle down beside a pleasant-looking young man who proved willing to answer the many inquiries that chased one another from his eager tongue.

How full of interest and enjoyment that hundred-mile ride was to him he could not have expressed in words, but he greatly entertained his newly made acquaintance by his bright and shrewd comments upon the places and people they passed in their rapid flight ; for although there was no lack of pride in Donald's composition, it was not of that foolish kind which would rather remain in ignorance than court exposure by asking questions. It never occurred to him to feign a thorough familiarity with the wonders of the railway. He was quite willing that everybody should know that he had never been on board a car before, and consequently he enjoyed himself ever so much more than if he had attempted to sail under false colors.

When the train rolled into the big brick station at Chebucto, he was standing on the car platform looking eagerly into the crowd for an expected face. He had not to look long. On the outskirts of the throng stood a slightly built young man not many years his senior, who, catching sight of him, waved his hand in token of welcome, while a smile of unmistakable gladness irradiated his pale face. Springing from the platform, Donald pressed toward him with extended hand, exclaiming : " Mr. Munroe, how glad I am to see you ! "

"No gladder than I am to see you, Donald," was the answer, as Mr. Munroe put his thin, delicate hand into Donald's sturdy grasp. "I have been looking forward to your coming quite impatiently. What a splendid strong chap you are! I wish I had some of your vigor. But, come along; we will get your trunk and drive off to my place. The cab is waiting for us outside."

A quarter of an hour later, Donald was standing in what seemed to him the most elegant room he had ever seen in his life. Frederick Munroe's uncle had been simply a plain merchant with very commonplace ideas; and when the house came into the nephew's hands it was just like the ordinary dwelling of the well-to-do. But the new possessor did not have it long before he began a transformation that, in the course of a couple of years, so changed the place as to make it quite unrecognizable by Mr. Munroe, the elder, could he have revisited his former home. Everything that a refined taste aided by an ample income could accomplish had been done. Soft carpets covered the floors, etchings and water colors of decided merit adorned the walls, carved bookcases, filled with volumes in artistic binding, stood here and there, rich portieres drooped across the door spaces; and altogether the whole effect, although notably quiet and subdued, was pleasing in the extreme.

The handsomest parlor that Donald had hitherto seen was Mr. Patterson's—a very pretty room in its way, but no preparation for the combination of luxury and elegance Mr. Munroe's suite of rooms presented. After

entering the house and putting off his coat and hat, he stood for some minutes looking about him while his host went off to give directions about dinner; and there and then he made a discovery, to wit, that he possessed the faculty of artistic appreciation. Instead of being awed and put ill at ease by all this richness and beauty, novel as it was to him, he found himself responding to it with something like fervor. Of course, he could not as yet enter into the thousand and one refinements of art that together constituted so satisfying a *tout ensemble*, but he could, and did, enter with all his heart into the enjoyment of the general effect; and when Mr. Munroe returned he was as much surprised as gratified by his appropriate and appreciative comments.

"Why, Donald," he exclaimed, "you have the soul of an artist, or of an art critic, at all events. You seem to know right off what are the best things in my room, and I am sure I cannot imagine where you learned that at Rivervale. It must come to you by intuition."

"I think it must," responded Donald, with a little laugh of pleasure at Mr. Munroe's words, "for I am sure I never saw so many beautiful things in my life before; although, of course, I have read a good deal about pictures and other things in the magazines you have sent me, and perhaps that has helped me to have right ideas about them."

Not only was Mr. Munroe's establishment luxuriously furnished, but it was also admirably managed. Together with the house, his uncle had left him a housekeeper—

an excellent woman, still in the prime of life, who had lost both her husband and only son many years before, and who had been with the elder Mr. Munroe for ten years before his death. The nephew was more than glad to retain her services. He placed the entire management of the household affairs in her hands, paid her a liberal salary, and thus enjoyed a freedom from care in that direction such as falls to the lot of few in similar circumstances.

Half an hour after their arrival, Mrs. Dodson, the housekeeper, summoned them to dinner, and Donald followed his host into the dining room. Here everything was on the same scale of costly elegance as in the drawing room; and as Donald drew his morocco-cushioned chair up to the table resplendent with snowy linen, glittering glass, and shining silver, there came over him a sense of luxurious ease as novel as it was delightful. He could not help making a mental comparison between the frugal, though ever neat and wholesome, board at home and the sumptuous furnishings and fare now.

But these thoughts were quickly banished from his mind as he fell into a lively conversation with his host, who had many questions to ask concerning Rivervale, for which place and its people he seemed to have a very kindly feeling. In thus talking about home, Donald soon lost all sense of strangeness, and showed that it would not be long before he would adapt himself to his new environment.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOVEL SURROUNDINGS.

WHEN Donald went to his room that first night at Mr. Munroe's and looked about upon the many—to him at least—novel comforts and luxurious appointments, his feelings found vent in an exclamation of, “Well, if I am not one of the luckiest chaps in the world. Just to think of my having such a room as this all to myself while I am in Chebucto, and living in such a beautiful house. Why, I hardly know myself here. I seem to be a different person altogether.”

At that moment he caught sight of his figure as it was reflected in the long pier glass; and at once his face fell, and the exultant tone was gone as he continued, still speaking his thought aloud:

“No, I take that back. I do know myself. I do not think there is much chance of my forgetting that I am Donald Grant, from Rivervale, so long as I look like this.”

And with a rueful expression he surveyed the image he beheld in the mirror before him and tried to imagine how he must look beside his host. The contrast certainly was very striking in many ways; for he was tall and well-proportioned, both face and form bespeaking energy, endurance, and high spirit, while his ruddy cheeks and

flashing eyes were sufficient proof of abundant health and vigor.

Mr. Munroe, on the other hand, seemed of not more than medium height; and his slight, almost fragile figure, pale, delicate face, gentle gray eyes, and soft, low voice, altogether gave one the impression of his being older and smaller than he really was. Yet as a matter of fact, he stood but an inch shorter than Donald, and had only four more years to his credit.

But it was not the physical contrast that stirred Donald's mind as he gazed into the glass. His thought lay still more upon the surface. It was the contrast in clothes that concerned him and put so sudden a damper upon his enthusiasm.

Mr. Munroe took pleasure in dressing himself in careful accordance with the prevailing fashion and with the utmost good taste. Poor Donald, although his innate preference for well-fitting and becoming habiliments was no less strong than his friend's, had never enjoyed the opportunity of gratifying it. His garments had been homespun and homemade until he began teaching; and after that he had nothing better to count upon than the very uncertain attempts of old Selvage, the only tailor Beechmount could boast, to make him a suit that could be reasonably considered a decent fit.

"It is no use talking," he soliloquized, turning this way and that in order to get a view of himself on all sides. "These clothes won't do for Chebucto. I must get something better right away, or I will have no peace

of mind—or body, either, for that matter.” And then, having comforted himself somewhat by this resolution, he proceeded to take off the unsatisfactory garments, throwing them down as though he wished very much he might never see them again.

At breakfast the next morning he broached the subject to his host who, with quick instinct, entered into his feelings in the matter and gave him some very sage counsel.

“You need not concern yourself much about your clothes, Donald,” he said, with a pleasant smile of sympathy. “They are not taken into account at the university. Nearly all the students come in from the country, and just wear plain homespun like yourself. However, perhaps you might as well get one suit for occasions when you want to look your best; so we will drop in at my tailors this morning and you can order whatever pleases you best.”

“Oh, thank you, Mr. Munroe,” exclaimed Donald, joyfully. “I laid out to get one new suit while I was here, you know, and to have it made at your tailor’s; and that means perfect satisfaction, I am sure, and not everlasting fault-finding as has been the case with old Selvage.”

Accordingly, the same morning they paid a visit to the sartorial artists whom Mr. Munroe patronized, and Donald left his order for a suit, the price of which seemed to him surprisingly reasonable, considering the quality of cloth and style of make-up. He never suspected that

his munificent friend had, in an unnoticed aside, directed that half the charge should be put into his own account.

"Now," said Mr. Munroe, "when you get into those clothes you will be as well-dressed as any man need be; and there is no doubt the knowledge of that does contribute a good deal to a fellow's peace of mind."

"Indeed it does," laughed Donald. "I am quite enough of a country bumpkin in my looks and manners, and I do not want to proclaim the fact still more obtrusively by my clothes if I can help it."

During the next few days, under his host's guidance, Donald "did the lions" of Chebucto. There was much to delight him about the city. The spacious, beautiful harbor with the stately ships riding at anchor on its blue-green bosom; the miles of wharves and piers crowded with all kinds of craft and alive with commercial bustle and activity; the mighty fortress which rose above the city or commanded the entrance to the harbor, the huge cannon looking out threateningly through the dark embrasures; the long lines of shops, gay with goods invitingly displayed and thronged with people ever coming and going. To him, fresh from the fields, "with the hayseed still in his hair," as the saying is, these sights were full of delightful novelty; and day by day he felt growing stronger within him the determination to find a place for himself in this city when his course of study was finished; for he felt that he could never return to the country and there be content to spend his life.

But beside making the acquaintance of the city that

was to be his home for the next few years, save during the summer vacations, he was busy completing his preparation for the examinations so near at hand. He had two objects in view upon which his heart was strongly set. These were first, the winning of the country scholarship, which would entitle him to a remission of class fees and thus save him a good deal of expense; and second, to pass well enough to take advanced standing—that is, to be permitted to pass by the Freshman year and enter at once into the Sophomore class.

He was now nineteen. If he won advanced standing he would be twenty-two when he graduated, quite old enough, it seemed to him, to be beginning for one's self in the world; especially as he liked to hope that even then his studies would not cease, but that somehow he might be able to arrange for a post-graduate course in England or one of the great continental universities.

A week after his coming to Chebucto the examination took place. Mr. Munroe accompanied him to the university, and bade him "good-bye and good luck" as he parted with him at the door. The large library room was used as an examination hall, and feeling very anxious and nervous despite his previous experience of the same ordeal, Donald went in and took his seat at one of the long tables, where paper, pens, and ink were placed in readiness.

He was a little early, and had time to look about him and to try and still his throbbing pulses. Only one of the professors was present, a short, stout, round-faced

man, who moved about in an energetic way, but took no more notice of the different candidates sitting uneasily at their places and studying him with curious eyes, than he did of the books that stood in rows upon the shelves.

Of the candidates for matriculation there were nearly a score, who came in one by one until the tables were well filled, the stout professor taking good care that no two were sufficiently close together to be able to render one another assistance. Donald examined his companions, who were soon to be his competitors, with keen interest. They were, with few exceptions, country lads like himself, and as a rule his seniors. Only four out of the twenty seemed from their general appearance to belong to the city. Of the others, one in particular impressed him very much by his real or assumed indifference to the situation. He appeared to feel quite at home, and not to entertain the slightest doubt as to his getting through triumphantly. Donald regarded him with a feeling akin to envy.

"He can't feel very anxious about the examination," he thought to himself, "or he would not take things so coolly. I wonder whether he comes from the country or from the city. If he comes from the country, and really knows as much as he seems to think he does, I am afraid I have not much chance for the scholarship."

There were always two scholarships awarded at the beginning of each college term, one being open only to the city candidates, and the other to those from the country. Donald had therefore nothing to fear from the city lads,

however well they might be prepared ; but indeed could he have had his choice, he would have much preferred that it was with them he had to compete ; for they were only four in number, and all of them looked as though they were not much given to hard study.

At sharp ten o'clock the prompt professor, who may now be properly introduced as Professor Macdonnell, rapped upon the desk to command attention, and then proceeded to give his very nervous hearers the necessary directions as to the conduct of the examinations. They were not to hold the slightest communication with each other ; they were not to make use of any helps in answering the questions ; and as soon as they had finished their work, they were to fold their papers neatly together and hand them in to him as they passed out of the room. Having thus delivered himself, Professor Macdonnell handed to each candidate a printed slip upon which were the questions to be answered that morning.

As soon as Donald received his slip and ran his eyes hurriedly over it, his heart leaped within him for joy. The subjects were Greek and Latin ; and a quick glance down the list of questions was sufficient to tell him that in his faithful preparation under Mr. Patterson's directions, he had gone far ahead of the requirements of the examination paper, and would have little difficulty in disposing of the list as rapidly as he could write down his answers.

Having satisfied himself of this, he could not resist the temptation to glance around at the others before settling

down to work. It was very evident that they did not all share his enviable frame of mind. Some were studying their slips as though they could not catch the import of all the questions; others wore a dejected expression that seemed to say: "This paper is too hard for me;" others still were gazing around apparently seeking inspiration from the book-lined walls; while a very few, and among them the over-confident one who had attracted Donald's attention before, were already hard at work upon the answer to the first question. With a very hopeful feeling Donald followed their example, and soon all heads were bent over the tables and pens were scratching busily.

Three hours were allowed for the answering of the questions; but at the end of two Donald had cleared his paper, and with a sigh of relief he laid down his pen and leaned back in his chair to look about him, with a very comfortable sense of having done as well as he knew how. At once the professor's sharp eye was upon him, and with a marked Scotch accent he inquired:

"Have you finished your papers?"

"Yes, sir," replied Donald.

"Then please hand in your answers," said the professor; "and you need not return until two o'clock, when the examination in mathematics will be held."

Amid the envious looks of those who were still struggling in a sea of difficulties, Donald gathered up the sheets of foolscap he had covered, put them neatly together, and laid them on the desk. He was the first to finish, and Professor Macdonnell gave a quick glance

first at the answers then at himself as he passed the desk. In both cases the result seemed to be satisfactory; for his voice had a very pleasant tone, as he said:

"You have finished your work quickly. I trust you have done all you could."

"Oh, yes, sir," answered Donald, feeling pleased at the question. "I have been a good deal farther in the classics than the questions go."

"I am glad to hear it," returned the professor, regarding him with manifest interest. "You will find it a great advantage in your course to have a good start."

Just then the young fellow who assumed to be so entirely at his ease plumped down his answers in a very pompous way upon the desk, and Donald went on into the hall, whence he hurried off to find Mr. Munroe. As it happened, they met in the street not far from the university.

"Hello! Donald, what luck?" the latter asked as soon as he caught sight of him.

"Not so bad thus far," replied Donald, pulling out the question paper and putting it into Mr. Munroe's hands. "I answered every question inside of two hours; and I am pretty sure I answered them right too, for you know I went over all that work with Mr. Patterson more than a year ago."

Mr. Munroe glanced over the slip. "So you cleared the paper, eh?" he said. "Well, all I can say is that if your answers are correct and you do as well in the other examinations, you are pretty safe for both the scholarship

and the second year ; for this is the toughest paper I have ever seen set at matriculation."

Donald listened to this with kindling eyes.

"You don't mean to say so," he cried. "The toughest paper you have ever seen at the matriculation examination, and it did not bother me one bit to answer it from beginning to end ! I wonder how that other fellow got along ?"

"What other fellow ?" asked Mr. Munroe.

Donald then described the tall student who had made such a show of confidence and composure, and went on to give his impression of the whole proceeding, amusing his companion very much by his naïve and shrewd comments upon what had attracted his attention, not sparing even the awe-inspiring Professor Macdonnell. In the afternoon came the examination in mathematics. Now, Donald had not as much liking for this branch of study as he had for either classics or English. Algebra was his especial bugbear ; and when the question slip came into his hands he glanced over it in nervous haste to see how many questions there were in this subject. Happily for him there were but three, and of these he succeeded in answering two tolerably well ; the other he left unattempted.

On the following morning the examination in the English branches took place, and once more Donald felt at his ease. Not only had he a decided taste for this line of study, but Mr. Patterson was especially strong in it ; and together they had gone over the whole work of the

first two years in the university curriculum. Consequently, he had little difficulty in again clearing the paper.

This ended the examination, and then came the anxious waiting for the result.

CHAPTER XIV.

A GOOD START AT THE UNIVERSITY.

THE results of the entrance examinations at Chebucto University would be made known on Monday morning at ten o'clock. In the long, narrow, dreary hall of the building, just facing the front door, stood a blackboard, which was the medium of communication between the grave and reverend senate and the students. Upon it, written out in the round clerkly hand of Professor Macdonnell, appeared the lists that were messengers of joy or sorrow, of keen exultation or still keener disappointment, to those whose fate stood recorded upon them.

One of the earliest to present himself at the door of the university, not yet open, was Donald Grant, looking exceedingly well in the suit of clothes made for him by Mr. Munroe's tailor, and not unconscious of that fact, either. On the contrary, the sense of being so well attired was strong enough, in its pleasing influence, to mitigate the intensity of his impatience; and he rather enjoyed the waiting at the tightly shut door, since it gave him an opportunity to institute comparisons between himself and those who shared the waiting, with the result expressed (mentally, of course) in the following ejaculation:

"Well, I suppose I shall have a countrified look for a while, anyway, no matter what clothes I put on; but I

have this to comfort me, at all events, that I cannot look more countrified than some of these other fellows."

While occupying himself with this somewhat Pharisaical line of thought, the door was opened and the crowd of students pressed eagerly into the hall, making a great clatter on the smooth stone pavement. Donald was in the forefront of the throng, which jammed him up so close to the blackboard that he could hardly get room to read off the lists.

There were four of them: three long ones and a short one. Somehow, his eyes turned first to the short one. Its announcements were as follows: "The City Scholarship," Arthur Anderson; "The Country Scholarship," Donald Grant; "Admitted to Advanced Standing," Donald Grant.

There was no need for Donald to look at the longer lists. They could tell him nothing better than the short one had already told him. His highest hopes were realized, and in the supreme happiness of the moment it seemed as though he must dance and shout for very joy.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed, fervently, turning his back upon the blackboard, and urging his way out of the close-packed group with his face so illuminated with delight that the others could not help noticing him; and while he stood for a moment hesitating as to what he should do first and too bewildered by gladness to be able to decide, one of them, a handsome, well-dressed, prepossessing young fellow, approached him with outstretched hand.

"You look so happy," said he, smiling pleasantly, "that you must be Donald Grant. If I am correct, let us shake hands over our good luck. I am Arthur Anderson."

Returning the smile with interest, Donald warmly grasped the extended hand. "You are correct, Mr. Anderson ; I am Donald Grant, and I congratulate you upon your success."

"Thank you, very much," replied Arthur Anderson. "I don't mind saying I am more pleased about it than ever I was over anything in my life before. Father promised me a yacht next summer if I succeeded, thinking to himself, no doubt, that he would never be called upon to redeem his promise ; but I put in a tremendous amount of grinding just before the examinations, and that carried me through. How did you come out in the different subjects ? "

"I never stopped to look," answered Donald. "I must go back now and see."

There were not so many at the board by this time, and he had no difficulty in getting to the lists. As he had anticipated, he had done best in English, and second best in classics. In these two subjects he stood many points above any of the other candidates ; but in mathematics he was only third in the list, although still well up in the first class. Having passed first class throughout, his general average being over the eighty-five per cent required, he had fairly won his way into the second year, thus saving himself a whole year's study and expense ; a matter of no small importance to one who had only his

own slender earnings to depend upon to carry him through college.

"You have done well all around, I see, Mr. Grant," remarked Arthur Anderson at his side. "A good deal better than I have. It is well for me that we were not trying for the same scholarship, or I am afraid my yacht would never be built. But now, hurrah for 'a wet sheet and a flowing sea and a wind that follows fast.'" And after executing several steps of a hornpipe in a lively fashion, he caught Donald by the arm, exclaiming: "Let us go out into the fresh air. This place is not big enough for me, the way I feel at this moment."

Nothing loath, for he had taken an instantaneous liking to his new acquaintance and could not help feeling flattered at his evident desire to strike up a friendship, Donald went out with him to the street. They sauntered along together, he quite forgetting, as they vivaciously discussed their different methods of preparation and confided in one another their plans for the future, that he should have hastened off to give Mr. Munroe the good news, as was his first intention; and that his good friend was no doubt waiting eagerly at home, where a slight touch of illness confined him, to hear the results in which he felt such interest.

Presently they came to a very attractive-looking restaurant, and Arthur Anderson at once turned in, saying in an off-handed manner: "Come in, and let us celebrate our success."

Donald, new to the ways of the city, and innocent of

all danger in accepting the invitation, went in, and they took their seats at one of the marble-topped tables that were scattered over the handsome room in the rear, to which Anderson made his way with the air of a habitu  .

The waiter at once bustled up, and was given an order the purport of which Donald did not catch. He was gone a little while, and then returned bearing upon his tray a big bottle, wrapped in a white napkin, and two wine-glasses that looked fragile enough to be shivered by one's breath.

"Ah, ha!" exclaimed Anderson, as the bottle and glasses were placed upon the table. "This is the stuff. I don't often indulge in a bottle of fizz. It comes too high; but nothing else is worthy of the present occasion." Then, filling up the glasses with a light golden fluid the like of which his companion had never seen before, and which looked most enticing as it foamed and fizzed and sparkled before his eyes, Anderson lifted his glass, saying: "Here's to to-day's triumphs and future successes."

Donald half mechanically followed his example; but as the brimming glass neared his face, he caught the scent of its bubbling contents, and, with a sudden start, returned the glass to the table so quickly as to narrowly escape smashing it upon the smooth marble.

"Isn't this wine?" he asked, his face flushing as he spoke.

"Wine! of course it is; the very best of wine—champagne!" cried Anderson, a little nettled at the question.

"Then, if you please, I will not drink any," returned Donald, pushing his glass away from him. "I never drink wine."

For a moment Anderson seemed on the verge of saying something insulting. His lips curled in a smile of contempt, and his eyes flashed dangerously; but restraining himself by an evident effort, he managed to ask, politely enough:

"You are not one of those teetotallers that go to lodge meeting every week, are you?"

Donald laughed good-humoredly.

"No," said he, "I am not. I never belonged to a lodge. Indeed, for that matter, I never signed a pledge; but I never touch wine or any kind of strong drink, all the same."

Anderson's face fell. He had expected to enjoy his bottle of champagne with his new acquaintance, and to his dismay found himself *vis-a-vis* to what he would call "one of the cold-water crowd." It was really too bad, and he could not accept the situation without making another trial to have Donald drink with him. So putting on his most engaging manner, he said:

"Well, if you have not taken the pledge, you are at liberty to do as you please; and surely there can be no objection to a sociable glass of champagne in honor of your having done so well at the university."

But Donald by this time was thoroughly master of himself, and determined to get out of the restaurant as quickly as he could without being rude to Anderson.



Donald Grant.

"If you don't mind, Mr. Anderson," he replied, in a tone whose decision could not be mistaken, "I had rather not. I don't intend to touch wine as long as I live."

Anderson emptied his glass before speaking again, and then with an injured air got up from his seat, saying:

"Well, of course, I don't want to have you drink against your wishes. We will leave the rest of the bottle to the waiter."

Feeling regret at his companion's chagrin, but altogether satisfied as to the rightfulness of his own action, Donald gladly left the restaurant. The two walked on together for a block, but both felt the situation to be one of constraint, and by mutual consent they parted at the first corner. Donald hurried off to Mr. Munroe's, being now conscious of a feeling of shamefacedness in that he had delayed even for a moment in bringing him the news that he well knew would be so welcome to him.

Mr. Munroe was sitting in the bow window of the parlor, looking out expectantly into the street, as Donald bounded up the steps all out of breath; for he had run a good part of the way in order to make up for his loitering in Anderson's company.

"Hello! here you are at last, Donald!" he cried, when the latter came into the room, hot and panting. "You were so long coming, I began to fear lest you might not have good news to tell. But I think it must be all right, you look so jubilant."

"All right as possible," cried Donald, too excited to

sit down. "I have won the country scholarship and have been admitted into the second year."

Mr. Munroe sprang from his easy chair and threw his arms around Donald's neck.

"You splendid fellow!" he exclaimed, enthusiastically. "You make me feel proud. A thousand congratulations upon your brilliant success. Here," giving him a push into a chair opposite his own, "sit down there and tell me all about it."

Donald sat down and proceeded to give the full particulars, not only of the results of the examinations, but also of his acquaintance with Arthur Anderson and what it had led to.

Mr. Munroe's countenance as he listened to the latter part of the narration betokened mingled amusement and approbation, and when Donald had finished, he clapped him on the knee, saying:

"You did well, Donald, my boy, you did well. It would have been an ill beginning for you to celebrate your success by drinking champagne at Roulard's with Arthur Anderson. I don't pretend to be a teetotaller, but I do detest this drinking at bars and restaurants. Anyway, Arthur Anderson is not the right kind of a college chum for you, and I am very glad you put a check upon his advances."

He then went on to explain that Arthur Anderson was the only son of one of the wealthiest merchants in the city, and had been brought up amidst gayety and luxury, which made his success as a student all the more remark-

able. He had been a wild boy, always getting into scrapes of some kind, and promised to be a still wilder man, being allowed plenty of pocket money and his own way so long as it did not directly cross his father's. This he was politic enough to carefully avoid. Altogether, he was not a suitable companion for Donald; and the latter, while feeling some regret that so attractive a young man should have such drawbacks, fully agreed with Mr. Munroe that the less he had to do with him in future the better.

The day after the announcement of the results came the formal opening of the university, which Donald greatly enjoyed. It took place with a good deal of pomp and ceremony in the House of Assembly, the students gathering at the university and marching thither in a body, headed by the principal and the professors in full regalia, their black gowns pleasantly touched with color by the blue or scarlet hoods they wore in token of the different degrees they held. These hoods at once caught Donald's eye, and on inquiring and being informed what they signified, he said to himself with serene resolution :

“If I am spared, I shall wear one or both of those hoods before I am ten years older. Nothing less than a master of arts or doctor of philosophy will satisfy me.”

He had been so successful hitherto in fulfilling his ambitions, that it was little wonder if he was coming to think that one had only to be sufficiently in earnest and work hard enough, in order to accomplish any purpose within the bounds of reason. He knew those blue and

scarlet hoods were granted by European universities, but that did not dash his hopes of winning them a whit. He, too, God willing, would in due time be a student at one of these universities, and do his best to earn its honors.

The principal exercises of the day were the delivering of the inaugural address and the reading out of the results of the recent examinations. The latter came first, and Donald's face blushed with pleasure at the rounds of applause which greeted the announcement of his success, and the principal's statement that the general average of proficiency shown by the matriculants this year had been higher than any previous year.

Then came the inaugural address; and when the venerable principal gave out that this would be delivered by Professor McLeod who, after a brilliant course of study in England and Germany, had been appointed to the chair of Physics, Donald pricked up his ears at the familiar name and craned forward eagerly to see who should respond to this flattering introduction.

When the round of applause that the announcement evoked had subsided, there came out from the group of professors a tall, dark, handsome man about thirty years of age, whom Donald recognized at once, despite the changes and improvements wrought by time and culture, as his teacher at Rivervale ten years before. When Mr. McLeod was there he had said he felt sure that he and Donald would meet again; and here, sure enough, was the fulfillment of his prophecy.

With an especial feeling of interest, Donald listened to

the admirable address Professor McLeod delivered, and enjoyed its unwonted originality of thought and expression. No one applauded the good points with which it bristled more heartily than he, and when the speaker finished he resolved to lose no time in making himself known to him.

He had not long to wait for his opportunity. After the close of the proceedings, some of the professors remained to exchange greetings with friends. One of those who did so was Professor McLeod; and after waiting for a favorable moment, Donald made bold to present himself before him with the question:

"Professor McLeod, do you remember me?"

The professor critically surveyed the handsome, stalwart lad before him, and then shook his head, saying courteously: "I am afraid that I do not."

"I am Donald Grant, of Rivervale," returned Donald.

Instantly the professor's face lit up with a smile of unmistakable pleasure, and he grasped the young student's hand in token of hearty recognition.

"And you are Donald Grant, who used to be such a comfort to me in the Rivervale school ten years ago. What a fine big fellow you have developed into! And you have evidently not forgotten your good habits, seeing what a brilliant beginning you have made at our university. You must come to my room some evening soon and tell me all about yourself. I am glad—very glad, indeed—to meet with you again, and shall hope to see a good deal of you."

CHAPTER XV.

SETTLING DOWN TO WORK.

THE day-after convocation the regular work of the university for the winter term was begun. Donald found that he had to take four "required" subjects, and was free to take as many "optionals" or "electives" as he saw fit. The required subjects were mathematics and classics, of course, chemistry and modern languages; and, acting upon Mr. Munroe's advice, which, happily, too, accorded with his own inclinations, he selected as an optional the lectures on rhetoric that formed part of the first year's course.

The professor of rhetoric was Dr. Madell, who had won fame, not only as a master of the theoretical side of the subject, but as an exponent of its practical value; his novels having a wide popularity as much because of their charming style as of the brilliant imagination they displayed. He was a great favorite with the students; for he took pains to make his own subject, interesting as it was of itself, still more attractive by his vivid presentation of it. Then he was always ready to talk about his theme, and to follow out its wide ramifications. Donald did not take long to find this out, and many a delightful and instructive discussion of some question suggested by the morning's lecture did he have with the genial professor during

the winter. The great world of literature had a strong fascination for the young student. To speak and write his mother tongue clearly, fluently, forcibly, and, perchance, eloquently, was his ruling desire; and, therefore, all his preferences in his studies were for those branches that helped toward the achievement of this happy faculty. Professor Madell was the first author of established reputation he had known, and he regarded him with a degree of admiration that was closely akin to reverence.

In mathematics his leader was Professor Macdonnell—a most competent teacher, thoroughly up in his intricate subject, and very lucid in his mode of presenting it; but as short of temper as he was of body, and given to saying cutting things that made him rather unpopular with his students. Donald never felt quite at home with him. Mathematics was his most troublesome subject. He had never taken kindly to it, and the dread of the professor's sharp tongue tended to make him nervous when reciting; so that it was always a relief to him when the class was over for the day. He took much comfort from the knowledge that in the next year he could drop the subject altogether. Had he known Professor Macdonnell better, however, he need not have been so much troubled in his mind. The shrewd Scotchman quickly discerned those of his students who were really doing their best, though their answers might be very wide of the mark at times, and what ones of them were shirking the difficulties instead of facing them fairly; and it was for this latter class that he reserved his stinging sarcasm. As it

was, Donald did his best, and although outdone both at recitation and examination by some others whose minds had a mathematical bent, he nevertheless managed to maintain a creditable standing in the class.'

Professor Dawson had the department of chemistry; a man of some renown in that branch of science, but not at all happy in his method of teaching it. He had a hesitating manner and a rather indistinct utterance, so it was no wonder if the students much preferred the experiments, in which he was an adept, to his lectures, in which he seemed only a tyro. His manner was retiring, moreover, and kept the young men at a distance from him; so that Donald, who had a very sensitive nature and could not bear to seem like an intruder upon any one, never came to be on easy terms with him, although he received great benefit from his instruction.

Next to literature and languages, Donald loved the classics; and in this subject he had one of the best teachers in the university, as well as the oddest-looking man on its staff. Certainly, Professor Thompson's physical appearance gave little hint of the mental powers of the man. He was as slim as the proverbial fishing pole. He walked in a peculiar tilting way, as though he were stepping upon springs. His face was as thin as his body, and his features strongly aquiline; yet a rich color suggestive of warm blood within mantled in his cheeks, and even darkly shaded the farthest tip of his nose. His hair was thin and of a golden red hue. But what, above all these characteristics, attracted one's attention was the

fact that his left arm was missing. Only a short stump marked the place where it ought to have been ; and yet so expert and agile was the professor in his use of the right, that he seemed hardly to miss the other.

It took Donald a little while to make his way to an easy footing with Professor Thompson ; but once this was established, he became much attached to him, and was in turn regarded by the professor with a very kindly interest. As will be told farther on, he was destined to render his teacher most timely service in an hour of great peril.

The department of modern languages was in the hands of Prof. Liechtan, a talented Swiss, well versed in both French and German ; a very faithful, energetic teacher, under whom Donald made good progress.

In regard to his fellow-students, Donald found himself at first somewhat awkwardly situated, owing to his having, by virtue of winning advanced standing, skipped over the Freshman year and taken his place among the Sophomores. Had he begun with the Freshmen he would, of course, have been in just the same circumstances as his classmates, and a bond of sympathy would have been quickly established among themselves.

But with the Sophomore class it was very different. They had all been one term together at the university already. Their likes and dislikes, their friendships and rivalries, were already formed. They had pretty well gotten one another's gauge, so to speak. His sudden entrance among them, however, took them somewhat by

surprise. They were inclined to regard him as an intruder, and to put him "into chancery," for a while at all events, until they saw what stuff he was made of. Some of them, too, looked jealously upon him. If he continued as brilliantly as he had begun, he must needs prove a dangerous competitor for the class honors. They were, therefore, not disposed to give him a kindly reception.

Donald, with his keen perception and quick sensitiveness, could not fail to be at once conscious of the state of affairs, and to feel a good deal troubled over it. Popularity was as precious to him as to any other youth. He desired to be liked by his fellow-students no less than by his instructors, and it worried him to find the feeling in the class thus adverse to him without his having given any cause for it. He told Mr. Munroe how matters stood.

"Now, my dear boy," said his clear-headed friend, "just don't you bother yourself about the business one bit. College students are only school boys half grown up, trying to put on the dignity of manhood before they have put off the foolishness of boyhood. Your classmates are acting in that way in order to impress you with a due sense of your privilege in being admitted to their august society. It amuses them. Do not let it hurt you. Assume a sweet unconsciousness of it. Let it affect you no more than the air about you. Do not make any special advances toward them, but be quick to respond to any they make to you; and as sure as your name's Donald, you will, before long, find the best of them at all events as friendly as you could wish."

Donald recognized the force of this sound advice, and proceeded to act upon it. He had great faith in Mr. Munroe's counsel, and felt it to be a piece of peculiar good fortune that he had such a counsellor at hand ; for where everything was so novel, and he was so anxious to do just the right thing in the right way and had so little experience of his own to guide him, the gentle, shrewd, kindly suggestions of his cultured friend and his ready answers to all questions, were of unspeakable comfort to the country youth seeking to make headway in the graces of social intercourse, as well as in the acquirement of intellectual riches.

As the days went by, the accuracy of Mr. Munroe's forecast revealed itself, very much to Donald's gratification. Always bright and pleasant, yet in no way intrusive, his classmates could not long maintain against him their foolish attitude of reserve. They realized that he was quite too good a fellow to be excluded from their circle, and by the end of the first month he had established almost as sure a footing among them as if he had been with them from the start.

In regard to his work, he found himself at first considerably handicapped by his lack of experience in taking notes. He had never had any practice which would prepare him for listening to an hour's lecture and getting the gist of it into his notebook, and he often felt sorely dismayed because so much would be missed that seemed essential. He was not a particularly rapid penman, and this fact would have told materially to his disadvantage

but for the faculty of rapid condensation which he possessed in a marked degree. This enabled him to jot down the leading points in their proper connection, although much of the language in which they were stated might be let slip.

He was very happy in his new sphere. For the first time, his whole nature had found room to expand. He heartily entered into and enjoyed the social side of university life. There were, of course, all sorts and conditions of young men among the many students gathered together. Some were there simply because their fathers had sent them. They did not propose to study any harder than they could help, but to have as good a time as possible. Arthur Anderson was a fair type of this class. Quite content with his first success, he had no idea of attempting to follow it up, and would be certain to make a poor showing at the final examination. Others, again, had come because they considered a degree part of the necessary outfit of a gentleman. They would, therefore, work hard enough to make sure of passing; but beyond that they had no ambition. The majority of the students, however, belonged to neither of these two classes, but, like Donald himself, had made their own way to the university and would pay their own way through it. Their ambition went higher than the mere degree. They had in mind the prizes and honors that were to be won by strenuous endeavor, and their chief thought was study, not amusement. Among these Donald found his friends. They were mostly country lads like

himself, and they had much in common besides their mutual interests and ambitions.

One feature of the university that he especially enjoyed was the students' debating society. This met every Friday evening in the classical room which, with its sloping tiers of seats, was well adapted for the purpose. He had always felt a strong impulse toward speech making, and at home had indulged the inclination by committing to memory portions of famous orations and speeches, and repeating them in the barn to an audience composed of his own brothers, who never failed to accord him a most appreciative hearing and unlimited applause. In this way, almost without knowing it, he had been acquiring the rudiments of the art of oratory; and he gained further experience of value by venturing now and then to prepare original speeches and deliver them in the same manner.

One Saturday morning he happened to mention something about this practice of his to Mr. Patterson. The head master at once became deeply interested.

"You could hardly employ your time better, Donald," said he. "An easy and graceful delivery will be of immense value to you in manhood. Won't you give me one of your speeches now? I am very eager to see how you can get it off."

After some persuasion Donald acceded, reciting not one of his own composition, but a fine passage from one of Daniel Webster's.

"You did that very well indeed," said Mr. Patterson,

when he had finished ; " far better than I would have expected, seeing that you have had no training. Would you mind now if I pointed out some of the mistakes you made ? "

" Indeed, I would not, sir," cried Donald, earnestly. " I would be only too glad to have you do it."

Mr. Patterson then proceeded to criticise the delivery of the oration, while Donald listened attentively, and then tried over again some portions of it, bearing in mind what had been said. This was the beginning of a series of lessons in elocution that lasted as long as the Saturday morning meetings, whereby Donald received an amount of permanent benefit, the full measure of which he did not realize until the time came for him to take part in the debating society.

He had not taken any part in the first few meetings. He wanted to feel more at home, and to get the run of the rules of debate before he ventured to open his mouth. So he listened attentively to the others, and mentally criticised them somewhat after the way in which Mr. Patterson had openly criticised him. At each successive meeting he felt more strongly tempted to get upon his feet when the debate was thrown open ; but he was nevertheless a good deal staggered when the committee of arrangement notified him that he had been selected to second the leader on the negative side in the debate on the following Friday evening.

The subject was one of more than usual interest at the time, being stated thus : " Resolved, That the university

should not be open to women." Much discussion in the public press and on the platform had already taken place. The advocates of woman's right to higher education were gaining ground. The feeling in the university was, on the whole, against them. But Donald shared their opinions, and heartily sympathized with their endeavors. He could not see why his sex should monopolize the benefits and privileges of university life. He was consequently very glad to find himself on what he considered the right side of the subject, and this made it easier for him to undertake the duty assigned him by the committee.

Having done so, he proceeded at once to prepare himself with characteristic thoroughness; for although he was not to lead, he resolved to take as much pains as if he were, and then he would be sure to have plenty to say in his role of seconder. He had no idea of relying upon the speeches of his opponents for inspiration. He would bring his own inspiration with him in the form of well-digested thought and argument.

Mr. Munroe showed a hearty interest in the matter, and was very helpful in suggesting sources of information, and otherwise assisting him in preparing for the fray.

"You must be armed *cap-a-pie*, my boy," said he, with one of his sweet half-serious smiles; "for this is your first appearance, you know, and you must make as good an impression as possible."

Donald needed little urging. So much did the ap-

proaching debate occupy his thoughts that his studies stood in danger of suffering somewhat; and his nerves were getting into a condition the reverse of placid as the time for the meeting drew near. In fact, he never felt more nervous in his life than when he entered the classroom on the eventful evening. His feelings, therefore, may be easily imagined when a note was handed him which told him that his leader had been suddenly taken ill and would not be able to be present, and that he would have to fill his place!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE WINNING OF THE DEBATE.

“WHAT on earth shall I do?” asked Donald, almost in a groan, as, looking the very picture of dismay, he passed the note announcing his leader’s unavoidable absence over to Mr. Munroe, who took in its import at a glance.

“Do?” he replied at once. “Why, be your own leader, of course. You are probably far better prepared than Dunbar would have been, anyway.”

“Oh, but I can’t,” protested Donald, in sincerity. “I have not spoken here yet, and I will certainly break down at the very start if I attempt to take Dunbar’s place.”

“You will just do nothing of the kind, young man,” returned Mr. Munroe, in a semi-jocular tone. “I would be ashamed to own you if you did. No, no, Donald,” he continued, in a more serious strain, “here is your opportunity. You must not turn your back on it. Everybody knows that Dunbar was to lead. You can explain why you are in his place. Every allowance will therefore be made for you, and if you do well, as I am perfectly sure you will, all the more will be thought of it.”

Donald sat silent for a minute, thinking very hard and summoning all his resolution to meet the crisis.

"Very well," he said, quietly. "You are right, I know. You always are. I will do my best, and if I make a mess of it, I will at least have the satisfaction of having tried."

"That is the way to talk, my boy," answered Mr. Munroe, with a beaming smile of approval. "Go in and win. You are on the right side of the question, and you ought to carry the society with you."

The room was filling up during the course of this conversation, until it became evident that the attendance would be larger than at any previous meeting. This was due, of course, to the special interest of the subject, and not to the debaters for the evening. Having once made up his mind to face the unexpected responsibility of taking the lead on his side, Donald felt better pleased at the prospect of a good big audience than of a small one. The more there were to listen, the stronger would be the spur to his lagging courage, and the greater the likelihood of his making a creditable showing.

The debate was opened by one of the Seniors,—a large and rather imposing man named Fraser,—who spoke with the ease and assurance of a practiced debater. His arguments were not very cogent, and his whole speech, when analyzed, had not much solid matter in it. But he delivered himself of it in a very emphatic, oratorical fashion, that went far toward atoning for its deficiencies in reasoning and research; and he sat down at its close amid thunders of applause that showed he had made a decided impression upon his audience.

With parched mouth and palpitating nerves Donald rose to reply to him, receiving a hearty round of applause in token of its being his first appearance. He felt himself trembling in every limb; a mist filled his eyes and made the expectant faces before him so indistinct he could not identify Mr. Munroe, with whom he wished, from the bottom of his heart, he might at that moment change places. His tongue seemed as if it had gone on a strike, and refused to perform its office. There was a painful interval of breathless silence, as he stood by the chairman's desk striving in vain to burst the fetters of stage fright that apparently bound him like some magic spell.

Just at that moment the door opened and in stepped Professor McLeod. He quickly took the nearest seat, and then looked at Donald with an apologetic smile, as though to say: "Forgive my intrusion. Please do not let me interrupt you. Go right on."

That kindly smile broke the spell, and Donald's tongue began to work, somewhat haltingly and slowly at first, but moving with growing freedom as he warmed to the subject. The rich store of ideas he had so carefully prepared came more and more freely from his mind, until, by the end of the first five minutes, he had forgotten all his nervousness—forgotten everything, in fact, but the cause he had to plead. With a simple straightforward earnestness that won everybody's heart, he poured out his well-ordered arguments one after the other, while the crowd of students listened in a profound silence broken:

only by the rounds of applause that greeted each point as it was made.

When he concluded, the room rang with hearty plaudits; and as he resumed his seat beside Mr. Munroe, the latter, pressing his hand warmly, whispered: "Most excellently done, my budding Demosthenes. How glad you ought to be that Dunbar did not turn up! Your fame is made."

After Donald, followed Fraser's seconder—a small, sharp-featured student in the Sophomore year—Skinner by name—who, in a thin, acid voice endeavored to make light of his opponent's arguments without advancing any of his own. He succeeded in raising a laugh or two, being not without a spice of humor, but did Donald very little, if any, damage.

Donald then came on again, and this time speaking much more quietly, confined himself to answering what Fraser had advanced, doing his best to meet him at every point. He succeeded very well in the endeavor.

As the opener of the debate, Fraser, of course, had the right of closing, which he did in a speech of considerable power, directed entirely against what Donald had brought forward.

"He is knocking me all to pieces," whispered the latter to Mr. Munroe. "I wish I could speak again."

"Perhaps you will have another chance, although it is not the usual thing," was the reply.

A few minutes afterward, without attracting Donald's attention, he scribbled off a short note and had it passed

up to the chairman, who on reading it, nodded back an assent to the proposition it contained. Meanwhile the debate was thrown open and taken part in by a number of those present, until the chairman announced that the time for taking the vote had come. Before doing this, however, he wished to ask the society if the leader for the negative might not be permitted to speak again, in view of the circumstances under which he had taken part in the debate. A unanimous chorus of approval greeted the suggestion, whereupon, turning to Donald, the chairman invited him to once more take the floor.

A little surprised, but not at all reluctant, for he was full of fight—as the saying is—and intensely anxious to win the verdict, Donald accepted the invitation promptly. He was allowed ten minutes, and he made the most of his time, reviewing the arguments that had been adduced against his side and marshalling anew those in favor of it. So full of his subject was he that the chairman had to tell him when his time was up.

Immediately afterward the vote was taken by show of hands, and Donald's heart stood still as he awaited the result of the counting. There were seventy-five persons present eligible to vote, and of these thirty-five voted for the affirmative and forty for the negative. Donald had won, and his triumph was all the greater from the fact that he had had to encounter and overcome the prejudice already prevailing against the admission of women to the privileges of study in the university.

When the meeting was over, congratulations poured

in upon him from all sides ; but none gave him so much pleasure as the warm pressure of Professor McLeod's hand, and the deep, strong voice saying: " Well done, Donald Grant. This is a great triumph for Rivervale. What a pity the good people could not have been here to share in it ! "

He had already seen a good deal of the professor, although he did not yet attend his lectures. He quite often went up to his room in the university to ask his advice perhaps, or to tell him something of interest ; and he had no reason to doubt that in the brilliant young professor he had another friend upon whom he could depend for wise counsel and willing help, whenever he might require them. A fortunate youth indeed was he in the friends he made. They stood ready to meet and encourage and direct him in his ambition, to sympathize with and assist all his upreachings, to aid him in the development of what was best in his nature. Until he came to Chebucto this development had been almost altogether on the intellectual side of his being. His thought and concern had been concentrated upon his studies, upon his preparation for the university, where he hoped to make his mark ; and in Mr. Patterson he had enjoyed a rare ally and instructor.

At Chebucto he found in Mr. Munroe, Professor McLeod, and Professor Madell all that could be desired for the carrying on of the good work so well begun by Mr. Patterson ; and it might seem as though there could be nothing lacking toward the right maturing of his

mind and character. But was that really so? Assuming that every circumstance was in favor of a worthy mental development, would that be all? Was there nothing left out of account in such an estimate of opportunities and privileges? This was a question which had never so much as stirred in Donald's brain until it was asked of him by the Rev. John Sterling. It had come about in this way:

On the morning of his first Sunday in Chebucto, he asked Mr. Munroe, as they sat at breakfast, who was considered the best preacher in the Baptist churches of the city.

"I am afraid that is a subject upon which I can give you very little light," answered Mr. Munroe, with a smile of genial indifference; "for the fact is I rarely go to church, and when I do it is to the Cathedral. They are always sure to have some good music there, and sometimes quite tolerable preaching."

Donald's eyes opened a good deal at this reply. He had been brought up to regard regular churchgoing as one of the chief duties of life, and it shocked him to hear his host treating it in such an irreverent fashion.

Mr. Munroe noticed his confusion and hastened to his relief.

"Oh, please don't look at me like that, Donald," he cried, laughingly. "I never did lay claim to much piety, you know, and you must not mind me one bit. Just feel free to go to church three times every Sunday if you like. By the way," he added, "last night's paper ought to give us some information; let us look at it."

The paper was examined, and on one page was found a column full of announcements of the Sunday services, arranged in groups according to the different denominations.

"Here you are," said Mr. Munroe. "Just study this batch, and pick out the one that seems the most promising. I will go with you for once, seeing that you are such a stranger and my guest into the bargain."

Donald looked over the list, and was attracted at once by the name of the "Calvary Baptist Church" and that of its pastor, the Rev. John Sterling.

"I think I would like to go there," he said, pointing out the address to Mr. Munroe. "Do you know where it is?"

"Calvary Church?" replied Mr. Munroe. "Let me see. Why, of course I do. It is not more than ten minutes' walk from here, straight up the next street. Very well, that is where we will go."

They took care to be a little early, and were shown to good seats by a courteous usher. They had time to look about them as the church filled up. It was a large building, with the pews arranged in sloping tiers and capable of seating more than a thousand people. The whole appearance was of warmth, color and comfort; and to Donald, who had never worshiped elsewhere than in the bare, bleak, old-fashioned meeting house at Beechmount, the delightful coziness of this modern church was a perfect revelation. He gazed around with wide-open eyes of admiration at the tastefully frescoed walls, the great

windows of beautiful stained glass, the handsome pulpit, and then up to the ceiling of natural wood, grained and carved in fantastic fashion. It was all grateful to his æsthetic sense, and he had about made up his mind to choose Calvary for his church while in Chebucto when the pastor took his place in the pulpit.

With a throb of joy not hard to account for in one whose only previous experience had been of dry old Dr. Sternhold, Donald noted that he was a young man and had a bright, kind, sympathetic face, whose pleasant augury was strengthened by the rich, smooth voice in which he gave out the opening hymn. From that moment Donald had no eyes for either church or congregation, his whole attention being fixed upon the preacher. The sermon proved as great a revelation as the edifice in which it was delivered. Simple and yet solid; earnest without being sensational, and eloquent without being overwrought; logically evolved from the text, not appended to it so loosely that there was no making out the connecting link; brightened and pointed here and there by touches of a genuine mother wit which seemed to flash out half unconsciously, and in an unpremeditated way that immensely heightened its effect—such was the kind of discourse that Donald listened to on that Sunday morning; and when the preacher finished his mind was fully made up—Calvary should be his church and Mr. Sterling his pastor while he was in Chebucto.

As he and Mr. Munroe passed through the vestibule,

a young man stepped up to them with extended hand.

"We are very glad to see you in our church," he said, with a pleasant smile, "and will always be happy to show you a seat."

They shook hands with him and thanked him for his courtesy, Mr. Munroe adding in his own graceful way, for the attention had touched a responsive chord :

"You have a beautiful church and a grand preacher. I am glad you are willing to share your privileges so freely."

"Oh, yes, we are only too glad to do that," the young man smiled back, well pleased at the appreciation shown by the strangers.

"I won't need to look any farther for a church," said Donald, emphatically, as they walked homeward. "It seemed like a little bit of heaven in there this morning. What a noble face Mr. Sterling has and how every word he says seems to come right from his heart ! Don't you think so, Mr. Munroe ?"

Mr. Munroe gave a sort of sigh, as though he envied his companion his warm enthusiasm.

"I do think so, Donald. He is evidently very much in earnest, and certainly has a wholly sincere and sensible way of preaching. It would be a good thing for the church if there were more of his sort in the pulpits."

Full quarter of an hour before the time for the evening service, Donald presented himself at the church door, so eager was he to secure a seat, and was met by the young

man who had addressed him in the morning and who now introduced himself as Mr. Bell, asking Donald's name in return. Before showing him to a pew he told him there was a meeting held in the hall at the close of the services, and invited him to remain for it, which Donald promised to do.

Mr. Sterling's text that evening was from Timothy: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" and he preached an exceedingly powerful sermon upon the practical side of true religion, emphasizing the value of good works when done in the right spirit. It stirred Donald to the very depths. Carefully trained as he had been from the cradle to prefer the things that were honest, pure, and of good report, to their opposites, however tempting, and naturally endowed with a sturdy, self-respecting nature that made it easier for him to say "no" to Satan, in whatever guise, than it might be for some others, he had grown up under the lifeless preaching of Dr. Sternhold with very vague ideas as to the duty of a Christian. To resist evil, to attend regularly upon the religious services, to read one's Bible and say one's prayers night and morning—these about made up the sum of God's requirements. Having decently fulfilled them, one might consider his title clear to an eternal mansion.

But upon this comfortable conception of religion Mr. Sterling's sermon broke like a thunder clap upon the stillness of a midsummer day. In such a scheme in life, where did the "good works" unto which the man of God

should be "thoroughly furnished" come in? Donald had never been led to ask himself the question before.

"What am I doing for my Lord?" How the very air seemed to be ringing with it! Profoundly moved, he sat in his place until the bulk of the congregation had gone out, and then followed the few who went into the hall for the after meeting.

CHAPTER XVII.

INTO A LARGER LIFE.

ONLY a small proportion of the congregation which had crowded the church remained for the after-service. There were perhaps two hundred people in all in the bright, cheery, Sunday-school hall, and as Donald looked around, he was glad to note that the majority of these were comparatively young. Presently Mr. Bell came in, and catching sight of him took a seat beside him.

"A grand sermon, wasn't it?" he whispered. "Mr. Sterling always gives us lots to think about."

"He has just given me a great deal to think about," Donald whispered back.

Mr. Bell looked as if he would have liked to hear more, but just then Mr. Sterling gave out a hymn, and the service commenced.

It was a short and very simple service. After the hymn Mr. Sterling called upon one of the young men to lead in prayer. Then he spoke a few words himself, following the same line of thought that had been expressed in his sermon. A little while was then given to volunteer speaking, and a number took part, among them Mr. Bell, who spoke in a modest yet manly way of the joy of service.

"The joy of service!" thought Donald. "That is

something that I have never known ; and how full of it Mr. Bell seems to be ! No wonder, though. Just see how he worked for God, looking after strangers and making them feel at home ! Oh, how I envy him ! ”

Another hymn followed the speaking, after which Mr. Sterling, having in a few sentences gathered together the choicest thoughts that had been just uttered, went on to make a loving appeal to those present who had not yet taken any part in the Lord's work, to signify their intention of so doing by standing up for a moment. As he said this, it seemed to Donald that he was looking straight at him ; and so magnetic was the man, that the impulse to stand up simply to gratify him was almost irresistible. His heart throbbed as though it would fain burst its bonds. He felt his face alternately flushing and then growing white. His knees trembled as with palsy, and it was only by dint of a tremendous effort that he could prevent himself from either rising to his feet in response to the minister's appeal, or seizing his hat and bolting out the door.

The time seemed very long while Mr. Sterling stood waiting, and there were several who made known their resolution to become workers in the vineyard of the Lord ; but Donald managed to keep control of himself, although Mr. Bell could not help getting some idea of the struggle going on within him.

The moment the benediction was pronounced he hurried away, thus frustrating his new friend's kindly intention of introducing him to the pastor, who was

always eager to make the acquaintance of strangers in order to give them a hearty welcome to his church and to his home also.

But Donald felt that he could not wait. He must get into the open air. His brain was in a whirl of thoughts the like of which had never disturbed it before. From a spiritual point of view, his life hitherto had been a particularly placid one. Thanks to sound parental training and an innate preference for the good, he had contrived to keep a conscience commendably void of offense toward man, at all events, and with this he had been content. The question as to whether it had been in like manner void of offense toward God had never disturbed his serenity. Now, however, it faced him like an adversary in the way, and demanded an answer.

He did not go straight home. The night was fine and clear, and he paced the street between the church and Mr. Munroe's no less than six times, pondering deeply all the while, before he felt sufficiently composed to go in. He found his friend reclining in an arm chair before the fire, and solacing himself with a cigar as a preliminary to retiring for the night.

"Oh, there you are at last!" he exclaimed, as Donald entered the room. "I was wondering what had become of you, and whether it was not my duty to notify the police in case of your being lost, strayed or stolen. What mischief have you been up to? Come, out with it. I am in a certain sense responsible for your good behavior, you know, while you are under my roof."

Although Mr. Munroe's bantering grated upon him somewhat unpleasantly in his wrought-up state of mind, Donald tried hard to seem at his ease and to answer in the same spirit.

"I have not been up to any mischief at all," he said, "unless you would call staying to an after-meeting at the church mischief. Then, as the night was so fine, I have been stretching my legs a little before going to bed."

Mr. Munroe regarded him curiously as he spoke. His quick perception told him that Donald was doing his best to hide deep feeling under a show of unconcern. But he was too refined in his own feelings to attempt to intrude upon another's; so, throwing the remnant of his cigar into the fire, he rose from his chair with a well-simulated yawn, saying: "Well it is bedtime, I suppose, and no doubt you are quite ready to tumble in. Let us adjourn."

Donald was very glad to reach the seclusion of his own room. He had never in his life before felt such a longing to be alone as now. Throwing himself into a chair, he resumed the discussion within his own mind which had been begun in the street and interrupted by the brief conversation with Mr. Munroe. His mind was like a house divided against itself; and, as in the debate before the society, there was an affirmative and negative side, so now he found himself, just as though he were two distinct individualities, debating the question Mr. Sterling's sermon had aroused.

The point at issue was not difficult to state. He saw

it with perfect distinctness. From the point of view of the evening's discourse, his life had hitherto been little better than a blank. His religion had been purely theoretical, so to speak, and now the call had come to elevate it into a practical religion—to aim henceforth not at a mere routine observance of religious duties, but at being thoughtfully furnished unto all good works.

And why did he hesitate to obey the call? Why did he find himself disturbed to his heart's depths by it, and conscious of an opposition within that strove mightily to make answer as Felix did to Paul, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee."

The answer was simple enough. He did not attempt to argue against the rightfulness of the divine demand. He felt perfectly willing to confess that he had left undone a thousand and one things that he ought to have done, and that he had no claim to be considered other than an unprofitable servant. But it seemed to him that this was a most inconvenient season to begin to remedy the matter. Here he was right in the midst of the life he had so long and eagerly looked forward to and striven so hard to enter. He had achieved at the start a success that surpassed his brightest expectations, and the future could hardly have been more promising than it seemed. To rightly avail himself of the opportunities for intellectual and social culture now within his reach, would absorb all his time and energy. How, then, could he find room in the plan of his life for the new duties that

a response to Mr. Sterling's appeal would involve? For it was not his way to do anything by halves. The injunction, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," needed not to be impressed upon him. He clearly realized that if he responded to the summons in the same spirit as that in which it had been made, such a step would necessarily mean a consecration of time and thought and energy to the advancement of God's cause, that he was now devoting to the advancement of himself.

He came to no conclusion that night, nor for many nights afterward, although the question persistently obtruded itself upon his mind and refused to be put aside. He continued to attend the services at Calvary Church, but avoided the after-meeting, although Mr. Bell more than once pressed him to remain for it. He also managed to evade being brought into personal contact with Mr. Sterling, dreading lest the minister should seize the opportunity to urge an immediate decision upon him. He keenly felt the need of a friend to whom he might go for sympathy and counsel. Much as he loved and respected Mr. Munroe, Prof. McLeod, and Prof. Madill, he clearly understood that they could be of no assistance to him in a matter of purely spiritual concern, however helpful in the intellectual sphere. He could even predict what their advice would be, namely, to stick to his studies for the present and leave other interests alone, at least until he had passed through the university; and he was too honest with himself to attempt to silence the inward voice by securing a foreseen verdict against it.

In fact, he frankly admitted to himself that there was but one counsellor to whom he ought to go, and then with a full determination to abide by his answer whatever it might be—that one was Mr. Sterling; and, strangely enough, he could anticipate what his reply would be, although he had not the same objection to seeking it that he had in the case of Mr. Munroe and the others. On the contrary, he shrank from going to Mr. Sterling with the matter that troubled his mind, because he thought that in so doing he would practically commit himself. It would be a touching of the plow handles, at the very least, that could be followed up with credit only by taking a firm grip with the resolution not to look back again, but to cut a furrow as straight and deep and long as God might give him grace and strength to accomplish.

Of course, this mental conflict could not go on without some outward manifestations, which at first gave Mr. Munroe some concern. Donald's face took on such a troubled expression that he felt sure there must be something amiss either in his state of health or otherwise, the nature of which he was anxious to learn. He accordingly pressed him with inquiries, but could gain very little light. Donald did not want to lay the whole matter before him, and yet he did not see how, without doing so, he could explain it at all. So he kept his own counsel, although feeling all the while that his kind and generous friend might, with good reason, feel hurt at his inexplicable reserve.

Mr. Munroe did entertain such a feeling at first. Happily, that subtle instinct which enabled him at times almost to read another's mind came to his aid. He divined the true cause of his protégé's quietude, and respecting his right to maintain silence upon so sacred a matter, let sympathy take the place of pique and set himself to be as serene and cheery a companion as possible.

Donald noted the change with inexpressible gratitude, and all the deeper became his wonder that one in whose nature there was so much of the angelic should hold such lax views on religious matters and keep himself aloof, as far as possible, from all holy influences.

The weeks went by, and still Donald halted between two opinions. His studies became more and more engrossing, and he found the debating society increasingly interesting, while through Mr. Munroe he had opportunities of social relaxation that he keenly enjoyed. Not a week passed without his being invited to some pleasant gathering, and although he found that his entire ignorance of the art of dancing and of the mysteries of cards placed him sometimes at a disadvantage, he never failed to obtain sufficient entertainment without breaking the rule he had laid down for himself, of never taking part in either of these fascinating but perilous amusements.

Of course, all these influences helped to dull the edge of his anxiety concerning a right spiritual relation ; and as the end of the year approached he had grown somewhat callous, although the voice within still spoke at

times. In the midst of his unrest he had written fully about it to his father, and had received in reply a long and loving letter that voiced the mind of both parents, and the sense of which was that, so far away from him and so ignorant of the new life upon which he had entered, they felt they were hardly able to advise as to just what he ought to do ; and therefore they besought him to go to Mr. Sterling and open his mind and heart to him. When Donald had read the letter, he laid it down, saying tenderly :

“They are right. Mr. Sterling is the only one who can give me the counsel I need ; I will go to him.”

But he did not do so at once, and postponement followed postponement until the year neared its close. He would have liked to go home for the Christmas holidays, but the expense made it impracticable ; and he remained at Mr. Munroe's utilizing the time in reviewing the work already done and anticipating some of that which was to come.

On New Year's Eve a special watch night service was held in Calvary Church. It began at ten o'clock and continued until a few minutes after midnight. With a certain feeling of curiosity, Donald took his accustomed seat. He had never attended such a service before, and wondered of what nature it would be.

The church was filled with a congregation of men and women who evidently felt that the lateness of the hour and the fact of its being the very end of another year imparted a peculiar solemnity to the service. No one

was more affected by the influence of the latter thought than Donald. The year just about to close had been the most eventful of his life in many ways. It had witnessed the attainment of his long-cherished ambition; the winning of welcome and worthy triumphs; the gaining of friends whose very companionship had an educational value; the enjoyment of pleasant experiences hitherto only dreamed of. What a year of blessings it had been! With an overflowing heart might he exclaim, "Thou crownest the year with thy goodness."

In singing, and prayer, and address, the services proceeded as the hand of the clock in the curve of the gallery moved steadily toward midnight. There were not many minutes of the old year left when Mr. Sterling, leaning far over the edge of the pulpit as though he desired to get as near to his hearers as possible, put his whole heart into an almost passionate appeal to them not to let the year slip into eternity without dedicating themselves to God in the fullest manner.

"Oh, dear friends," he cried, his eyes glowing with Christlike love and his voice tremulous with intensity of earnestness, "bear with me while I press upon you the question: 'How much owest thou unto my Lord?' and beseech you in my Master's name to answer it, not to me, but to your own souls. We will spend the last moments of the year in silent prayer, and may God help us to place ourselves unreservedly in his hands for time and for eternity!"

In the space of solemn silence which followed while

the whole congregation went to their knees, it seemed to Donald as though he lived a lifetime. The startling, searching question put by the preacher illuminated his heart as a flash of lightning reveals the landscape at midnight; and he recoiled in keen remorse from what he said. As the innumerable blessings which had brightened his life crowded in upon his mind, the very voice of Jesus seemed to say in tones of patient, loving reproach: "All this I did for thee. What hast thou done for me?"

The people were not many minutes on their knees, but ere they rose again Donald's decision was made. The battle was fought and won, and he stood ready to say: "Here am I, Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" A strange sense of relief, of elation, thrilled him with new joy. He thought of Pilgrim when the grievous burden rolled off his weary back, and said to himself: "I am sure I feel as he did then. What a foolish creature I have been to bear my burden all this while, when I might have been freed from it long ago."

Together with the delightful sense of freedom came a desire to make the matter known. It seemed too joyous a thing to hide. Therefore, when Mr. Sterling, just before closing the service, asked if there were not some present who had resolved upon entering into a closer relation with God, and if so he would urge them to make their resolution public, for they would thus help others and help themselves too, Donald without hesitation at once rose to his feet.

A beautiful smile of gladness irradiated Mr. Sterling's face as their eyes met.

"God bless you, my young brother," said he. "You have begun the new year gloriously. The Master hath need of such as you to carry on his work."

Others followed Donald's example, and for each the minister had a word in season. Then he asked them all to remain for a few minutes after service was over.

Donald, of course, remained, and when Mr. Sterling grasped him warmly by the hand and looked lovingly into his eyes, his whole heart went out to him, and he felt willing to do anything he might ask.

"I have often seen you in my congregation," said the minister, "and have been anxious to make your acquaintance. I am so glad that it has begun in this way. I am sure we shall grow to be great friends, and you will be one of my willing helpers in doing our Master's work, will you not?"

"I will, indeed, so far as I can," answered Donald, earnestly. "I have been very unhappy just because I would not answer the call to work. I wanted all my time to myself. But I see things very differently now, and, God helping me, I am going to try to be of some use after this."

CHAPTER XVIII.

A NEW SPHERE OF ACTIVITY.

DONALD'S determination to take some part in religious work was no mere passing impulse. He meant what he said from the bottom of his heart, although, of course, not having had any previous experience of the kind his ideas were naturally somewhat vague as to what might be expected of him and what he might prove to be qualified to undertake. This, however, gave him no concern. Having once decided to respond to God's claims upon his energies, he was not at all exercised in mind as to the particular task that might be assigned him in the vineyard of the Lord. That was a matter upon which he would have to look to Mr. Sterling for direction.

Mr. Sterling did not keep him long in uncertainty. The day after New Year's, Donald received a note from him inviting him to take tea with him the following evening. At the parsonage, on his arrival, he found Mr. Bell and two other young men of about his own age, both of whom had taken the decisive step with him at the watch-night service. Although a little constrained at first through strangeness, the irresistible geniality of their host and the charming tact of his lovely wife soon broke down all barriers of reserve and the three young men felt themselves to be thoroughly at home. Sharers

as they were in the common gladness of liberation from the bondage of sin, their hearts warmed toward each other, and Donald was glad to have two such friends added to his widening circle.

One, by name Fred Heath, was a clerk in a large business establishment. He had a bright, shrewd, attractive face, and a general air of being all alive, so to speak, that promised well for any enterprise he should give his heart to. The other, William Randall, was a law student, and presented quite a contrast to his companion, being tall and slight, with an almost colorless face and dark blue eyes, which were apt to be set in an earnest gaze as though he were looking you through and through while you spoke with him. He would evidently move more cautiously and deliberately than Heath, but he was of the kind that, once committed to a trust, would die before deserting it.

After a delicious tea that spoke volumes for Mrs. Sterling's domestic management, and was heartily enjoyed by all, Mr. Sterling revealed his purpose in calling them together. He thought that the time had come for carrying out a scheme upon which his heart had long been set. The Society of Christian Endeavor, the Epworth League, and other such organizations for utilizing the services of the young people in the work of the church were unknown then, but here and there at different churches, societies existed that in many ways were anticipations of these movements which have, in these late years, grown to such magnitude and beneficence.



Donald Grant.

Such a society Mr. Sterling had determined upon establishing in his church, and he had invited his right-hand man, Mr. Bell, who was ever ready to co-operate in good works, and the three young recruits of the Christian army, whom he knew to be eager to be set to work, in order that they might talk the matter over and form the nucleus of the new society.

They all were at once favorably impressed by Mr. Sterling's scheme. A young men's society of some kind seemed most attractive to them, and the minister was delighted with the cordial manner in which they entered into the discussion of ways and means. Of course, only the merest outline of a plan could be determined upon. None of the party, not even Mr. Sterling, had had any previous experience in such an organization; and so they had nothing to assist them but their own good sense and inventive talent.

In the course of the discussion their varied characters were plainly manifested. Mr. Sterling, of course, took the lead, and had the most to say. But Mr. Heath's tongue wagged busily as his quick brain evolved suggestion after suggestion, and Mr. Bell was always ready with a comment or criticism which his experience in religious work well qualified him to make. Donald, for once, kept well in the background. It was all so new to him that he preferred to listen and learn. Mr. Randall seemed of the same mind, and he also listened more than talked. Yet every now and then he would make an observation so sound and sensible as to win the prompt

assent of the others, and proved that he was going to be a helper of no ordinary value.

The result of the deliberations was the outlining of a scheme for a Young Men's Institute, which the men of the church would be called together to consider at the first opportunity; and then Mr. Sterling's guests took their departure, leaving the minister in a rarely happy and hopeful frame of mind.

"Helen, my dear," said he to his wife after they had gone, "this night is the beginning of a new era in Calvary Church. The young men have never taken the place they should have taken in the work of the church, and we ministers have been principally to blame for it. We have not sought their co-operation as it was our duty, indeed our privilege, to do. They have been allowed to think that they would be of no account until their heads were bald or grey; until, in fact, the very best of their lives had been spent. But, thank God! our eyes are being opened. The day of the young people is dawning, and mark my words, Helen, though I claim not to be the prophet nor the son of the prophet, I venture to predict that within the next quarter of a century the enlistment and employment of the energies of the young people, the young women as well as the young men, in the work of Christ's church, will be the most significant and inspiring feature in the religious history of the world."

"I believe it with all my heart," responded Mrs. Sterling, her beautiful face lighting up with the same glad enthusiasm that made her husband radiant. "Is it not

glorious to think what may be done with such helpers as the dear young men who were here to-night? How glad I am that you have found them out, and received their sympathy and support. Your Young Men's Institute is half established already."

Mr. Sterling smiled at his wife's sanguine view of the situation.

"I only wish," said he, "that we might make it a Young Women's as well as a Young Men's Institute at the outset. But it is a matter in which we must hasten slowly. We have everything to learn, and the more simple our start the easier it will be to make; and then we can enlarge our scope when the success of our scheme warrants our so doing."

Mr. Sterling did not let the grass grow under his feet. Arrangements for the public meeting at which the new departure could be inaugurated were pressed forward vigorously, and Donald was a good deal disconcerted by being asked to take part in the proceedings. He wanted very much to be excused. Having never had any experience in religious work, he did not think it possible for him to comply with his pastor's request and make a speech at the meeting. It would be a hundred times harder than speaking in the debate, and could result only in a miserable failure that would be injurious to the cause he was to advocate.

But Mr. Sterling would not be gainsaid.

"No, no, my young brother," was his answer, smiling, yet firm. "I thoroughly sympathize with you in your

forebodings of failure. Every bit of that experience was my own not so many years ago. But you will not break down. Not a bit of it. A set speech will not be expected of you, nor would it be expedient for you to make one. You have a message for the young men like yourself. It came to you at the watch-night service. Surely you will not refuse to deliver it!"

And so unable to resist such urging, Donald consented, it being understood that Mr. Bell, Mr. Heath, and Mr. Randall would also speak and thus divide the burden with him.

The following Sunday, Mr. Sterling gave out an announcement to the effect that the men of the congregation, and particularly the young men, were earnestly requested to attend a meeting to be held in the Sunday-school hall on Tuesday evening, for an object that would be then explained. He purposely refrained from making known the object of the meeting, in order to arouse curiosity and thereby insure a large attendance.

The result justified his expectations. By eight o'clock on Tuesday evening there were no less than two hundred men gathered in the hall, eager to learn the reason of their being called together. In age they ranged from seventy to seventeen, and they fairly represented all the classes in the congregation.

As Donald looked around from his seat near the front, he could not find a single familiar face save a few that he had come to know from seeing them in the church on Sunday.

“What is the use of my attempting to speak?” he asked himself. “How much will these men care for what I, a perfect stranger to them, may say?”

Promptly at eight, Mr. Sterling opened the meeting with a stirring hymn which helped everybody to feel more at home, and followed it up with an earnest prayer for a special divine blessing upon what was to be done in the name of the Lord. Then, after another hymn, that most appropriate one for such an occasion—“Work, for the night is coming”—he proceeded to answer the look of inquiry that was upon every face by revealing his purpose in calling the meeting. He spoke briefly in order to leave as much time as possible for the young men who were to follow, and contented himself with outlining the scheme for a Young Men’s Institute that had been framed in his own parlor.

He was listened to with the closest attention by all, and if any reliance could be placed upon appearances, there was no doubt but that the new idea would receive at least a very careful consideration on the part of those present. Having done this much, he called upon Mr. Bell to point out how such an organization could be helpful in the church work.

Mr. Bell was well prepared and made an excellent presentation of his case, indicating a number of ways in which an association of young men for religious work could accomplish good, and emphasizing the fact that in thus blessing others they would themselves of a certainty be blessed.

Then Mr. Sterling called upon Donald, and the young student stepped up to the platform. He was in an intensely nervous state. All the surroundings were so novel and his own position most novel of all. For the debating society he had had some previous training that stood him in good stead when once his tongue became unloosed ; but for taking part in a religious meeting he had not had the slightest preparation. The rows of strange faces seemed to resolve themselves into a kind of hydra-headed creature, staring at him with cold, curious eyes of inquiry as to his right to address it. The perspiration gathered thickly upon his forehead and hands. Would the words never come ?

Yes, they would and did. By a heroic effort he mastered himself just as the silence was growing oppressive and began his address, speaking slowly and with manifest effort at first, but increasing in fluency and force as he found the hydra resolving itself back into its constituent countenances, and realized that they were listening to him with sympathetic interest.

His subject was the need of a definite work for young men who had entered into the Lord's service, and he made his own experience a basis for his remarks, relating very frankly and simply what has been already told in the course of this story.

"And now," he concluded, "I have tried to make it clear to you why I believe that every young man who has given his heart to God should at once seek to become a laborer in his vineyard. We can all do something,

somewhere, sometime, and this Institute which Mr. Sterling asks us to join with him in establishing is just what we want to help us in making the best use of the powers God has given us. If we go into it with all our hearts, and determined to work together for its success, it cannot fail to be a success; and as sure as it is, we will all share in its benefits, while we will be, under divine direction, a means of benefit to many others."

He spoke but ten minutes altogether, and was heard with almost breathless attention. His sincere, straightforward manner, absolutely free from self-conscious conceit, won the hearts of his listeners; and the very fact of his being a stranger caused what he said to make a deeper impression, thus proving a help instead of a hindrance, as he had feared. When he sat down he had won many admirers, some of whom were to prove welcome additions to his circle of friends in the early future.

After the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds," both Mr. Heath and Mr. Randall made short but effective speeches; the former aiming to show the part that business men could take in the proposed Institute, and the latter, the opportunity there would be for professional men to make themselves useful.

Then the meeting was thrown open to all and the speaking became general. It was at once evident that the new idea had found favor with the audience. One after another arose to commend it heartily, and to promise their cordial co-operation. Some of the graybeards, to be sure, thought it necessary to throw out words of

warning as to the danger of going too fast, and the importance of having everything done decently and in order. They had some misgivings as to what might be the consequences of a sudden infusion of young blood into the church. But they had no thought of standing in the way of the movement. It certainly contained promise of good, and seemed well worth a careful experiment.

So without more ado, the meeting proceeded, under Mr. Sterling's judicious guidance, to organize the Young Men's Institute of Calvary Church. Committees were appointed to draw up a constitution, to prepare a list of officers, and to make other preparations for a meeting to be held on the same evening of the following week, when the organization could be completed. After this had been done, Mr. Sterling said a few words expressive of his delight at the warm reception his scheme had been given, and with the singing of the doxology the meeting came to a close.

Donald went back to Mr. Munroe's so full of the new enterprise in which he had engaged, that he could not refrain from telling his friend all about it.

He was, of course, a good deal elated at having gotten on so well with his speech, and this, added to his own deep interest in the affair, caused him to speak with an unusual degree of animation. Mr. Munroe gave him the closest attention, asking questions, now and then, that showed a genuine sympathy with the speaker if not with his subject; and when he had finished, threw himself back in his chair with a sigh, saying in a tone whose

sadness he made no attempt to conceal: "Oh, Donald, my boy, how I envy you! May the mists of doubt never obscure that bright faith that now makes your life radiant! You have found the secret of true happiness, Donald, and you are richer than if you had found a diamond mine. It is not enough to believe the Bible. One must live it too. You have religion by the right end, God bless you; and so long as you hold it fast you will be a blessing to others and find abundant happiness for yourself. I repeat it, Donald; I envy you with all my heart."

Donald stood looking at his friend with strangely mingled feelings. He had never heard him speak so strongly before; and while he was delighted at his unexpected sympathy with him in regard to the Institute, he was touched to the heart by the sorrowful way in which he spoke; just as though the joys of Christian service were not for him, but had in some manner been forfeited forever.

But before he could speak, Mr. Munroe, reading in his eyes the unuttered question and anxious to anticipate it, gave a sudden change to the conversation by asking some questions about the Institute in an altogether different tone. Donald saw clearly that the curtain of his heart, lifted for a moment, had again been dropped, and that it would not be expedient for him to attempt any intrusion.

He could not help feeling disappointed. What Mr. Munroe had said aroused both his sympathy and his

curiosity. What did he mean by the mists of doubt? Donald had never doubted in his life a single verity of the Christian faith. Must everybody have doubts, and do they have the same effect upon every one as they seemed to have had upon his friend who, although his whole life was above reproach, was yet very different from the orthodox conception of a Christian?

With these questions upon his mind, he prayed very earnestly for Mr. Munroe that night, asking God to clear away the mists of doubt so that he might be a happy Christian. And he prayed for himself, that he might always live in the sunshine of an unclouded faith, and never let the mists gather about him.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE INSTITUTE AT WORK.

THE Young Men's Institute thus prosperously inaugurated, went forward with vigor, and expanded as it progressed. At the second meeting the officers were elected and the permanent committees formed. It is needless to say that Mr. Sterling was made president. As vice-president, one of the graybeards was wisely chosen, thus enlisting the interest of the older men. For treasurer, a man in middle life was elected. Mr. Bell had the secretaryship unanimously conferred upon him, and then the general committee was composed entirely of young men, Mr. Randall, Mr. Heath, and Donald being the first three selected. In this manner a very satisfactory representation of the different elements in the congregation was secured, and the apprehensions of the ultra-conservative folk measurably appeased.

The plan of the Institute as settled upon after prolonged but perfectly harmonious discussion, contemplated several lines of work. First and foremost, of course, stood the religious work. This was divided into the inside and outside work, the inside comprising the rendering of all possible assistance to the pastor in the performance of his duties; for instance, by making it a matter of obligation to be present at the Wednesday

evening service, and to take part in the exercises as opportunity offered. The inviting of friends—and strangers, too, if the chance presented itself—to the church service was also emphasized, and then the following up of any who might thus be influenced for good.

But the especial feature of the inside work was the prayer meeting just before the public service on Sunday evening. At this service there was always a large number of strangers, Mr. Sterling's reputation as a preacher and the ushers' reputation for courtesy to visitors being widely extended. The purpose of the prayer meeting was to plead for the divine blessing upon the whole service, so that it might be made instrumental in leading sinners to repentance. It was held in one of the Bible-class rooms and lasted just twenty minutes, closing ten minutes before the opening of the public service.

Mr. Sterling put great faith in this prayer meeting and looked for manifest results from it. He told the Institute that with such help as that, he was better off than Moses; for while the patriarch had only two to hold up his hands if they grew weary, he had at least twenty, each one as eager as Aaron or Hur for victory in the name of the Lord.

Then there was the outside work. At the outset, Mr. Sterling deemed it best that this should be confined to the holding of cottage meetings in the suburbs of the city, where there lived many people who rarely entered church or attended a prayer meeting simply because of

their distance from such means of grace. In the northern part of the city a large number of artisans and clerks on scanty salaries had established homes for themselves where rents were cheaper. They were, for the most part, quiet, respectable people who would go to church if it were near at hand, but lacking such accommodation, had gotten into the way of spending their Sunday as they pleased, without taking any trouble to seek out opportunities of religious instruction.

By visiting among these people, Mr. Sterling had ascertained their willingness to open their houses for cottage meetings; and having thus prepared the field, he now proceeded to turn into it the workers furnished him by the Institute.

Naturally enough, Donald, Mr. Heath, and Mr. Randall were among the first he called upon for this service, and they were all pleased when he proposed that they three should go together.

"It is a rule of the Jesuits," said he, smiling, "that the members of the order should always be either alone or in threes. They are not allowed to go in pairs, the idea being that thus the growth of intimate friendships is guarded against. I have no such idea in suggesting that you three should work together, but it seems to me you will make a good, strong corporal's guard, admirably adapted for the work to be done. Brother Heath can lead the singing, and Brother Grant and Brother Randall can divide the speaking and praying between them. Thus the burden of work will be fairly shared, and, of

course, you can always make such changes as seem expedient."

The arrangement thus outlined met with hearty approval. Fred Heath possessed quite a good tenor voice and a respectable knowledge of music. Randall had a decided gift in prayer, and Donald's talent certainly lay in the direction of public speaking; so that, thus working together, they would be able to supplement one another and be fully equal to the demands of any ordinary occasion.

The meetings were to be held on Sunday afternoon at three o'clock; and the next Sunday after the completing of the organization of the Institute, the three young men set forth to an appointment already arranged by Mr. Sterling. The day was bright and clear, and they were in excellent spirits despite a certain feeling of nervousness common to all. They felt strong in their companionship, and were also pleased with a sense of the dignity of their position. For the first time in their lives they were on their own responsibility, not subject to the direction of some older head. Heath, in fact, was in a state of high good humor close approaching gayety, and felt constrained to make a longer face as they came into the neighborhood where their meeting was to be held.

They were in the very outskirts of the city, where the streets raveled out, as it were, into a fringe of small cheap cottages, interspersed with vacant lots for the most part unfenced. Little knots of men loitered idly in the sun on the lee side of the street corners, smoking, and

chewing, and talking. Women's faces peered curiously out from the front windows at the passers-by, and in spite of the cold air, groups of children played in the snow as noisily as though they knew no difference between Sunday and Saturday.

So unpromising a state of affairs could hardly fail to throw a damper upon the young men's enthusiasm.

"Prospects do not seem very brilliant for our meeting," said Fred Heath, with a rueful look at the lounging men and shouting children. "Sunday seems to be their day out around here."

"I am afraid you are not far wrong," assented Donald. "They certainly do not look like people who would take much interest in a prayer meeting. But this is where Mr. Sterling wants us to begin, and that is the house where the meeting is to be held, just ahead of us."

The house was one of the largest in the neighborhood, and had a clean, well-kept appearance. As they approached the door, it was opened by a middle-aged woman, who met them with a smiling countenance and cordial greeting :

"I was sitting at the window waiting for you to come," said she, looking as pleased as if she would have liked to kiss them in turn. "Mr. Sterling, God bless him, said you would be here by three o'clock, and here you are. The room is half full already, and there'll be more coming in yet."

Thus talking, for with feminine instinct the good woman divined that the young men would be a little

strange at first and need to be helped to feel at home, she ushered them into a large room that occupied one side of her house. Here they found themselves face to face with a gathering of about thirty persons, two-thirds of whom were women and children. They were seated on rows of chairs borrowed for the occasion by the mistress of the house, and had taken their places as far away from the chairs provided for the conductors of the meeting as they could get. Evidently they felt no less strange than did the young men.

It had been settled on the way out that Donald should be the leader of the little meeting, and without waste of time he proceeded to business. A number of hymn books, brought for the purpose, were distributed among the audience, a familiar hymn given out, and then Fred Heath led off with his clear, sweet tenor. At first there was some hesitation, but presently more and more joined in until the volume of sound filled the house and poured out into the street, causing the children to cease their play that they might listen, and the loafing men to draw nigh in bashful curiosity. When the hymn was finished, Randall offered a brief, earnest prayer, after which Heath read a chapter from the New Testament. Another hymn followed, and then Donald gave the address.

After a good deal of thought, he had made up his mind that the best thing he could do was to take the life of Christ and speak on it, from time to time, so long as he should take part in the meetings. There was no portion of the Scripture with which he was more familiar

than the Gospels. They had always held an especial attraction for him, and he felt that it would be easier for him to prepare addresses suitable to the occasion from them than from any other part of the Bible.

During the singing a good many more people had slipped into the room ; so that when he began to speak it was comfortably filled with an audience that seemed prepared to give him the closest attention. Greatly to his relief, he was not bothered by that excessive nervousness which had oppressed him at the debating society and the Institute meeting. He loved his subject ; he had put his thoughts carefully in order before he left home ; he felt inspired by the fact that at last he was being used in the Master's service ; and the eager, interested faces of his listeners seemed to be saying to him : " We know you have something to tell us that will be for our good, and we are so anxious to hear it."

No wonder, then, that both thought and word came freely, and that as he enlarged upon the significance of the Saviour's advent, he spoke with such fluency and force that his companions were hardly less surprised than delighted. They had not expected him to display so many of the qualities of the orator, and they were at times strongly tempted to applaud his well-rounded sentences.

As for the little congregation, even the children fell under the speaker's sway and sat still upon the chairs, regarding him with wide-open eyes and listening to him with wide-open ears.

Having spoken almost half an hour,—and it seemed to him only a few minutes,—he brought his address to a close with an earnest appeal to his hearers to let Christ into their hearts, that through him *they* might be born again, and become heirs of eternal life. Then came another hymn, and then a few words of prayer from Mr. Heath concluded the meeting.

As the people passed out, the young men stood in the hall shaking hands with them, and inviting them to come again the next Sunday and bring as many of their friends as they could.

“Do not be afraid of too many coming. If you cannot all get into this room, we will hunt up a larger one,” called out Fred Heath, smiling brightly. “Come one, come all, and bring your families.”

There could be no doubt as to the promise of the new undertaking. If appearances were to be relied upon, Heath's hearty invitation would meet a no less hearty response. Good Mrs. Johnson, the mistress of the house where the meeting had been held, was overflowing with gladness.

“You have great gifts, my dear young gentlemen,” said she, regarding them with a look of undisguised admiration; “and oh, how beautiful it is to see you consecrating them to the Lord's service! I'm a proud woman to-day because of this meeting in my house. May God bless you, and may you live long to work for him as you are doing now.”

The three friends had come to the meeting hopeful and

cheery. They went away exultant. The result had been far better than their brightest expectations. The people had heard them gladly. The opening meeting had proved a success in every particular, and it only now remained to follow up the start so well made, in order that great good might be accomplished.

"Let us call at Mr. Sterling's and tell him all about it," suggested Heath, as they walked briskly back to town.

"Agreed," said the others promptly. So they turned in the direction of the pastor's residence.

As it happened, he opened the door for them, and his face lighted up when he saw them.

"Ah-ha!" he exclaimed. "You have come to report—that is good of you. Come right in and tell me all about it. I know it was a success. I can read that much in your faces, but I am eager for the details."

They all went into the drawing room, where Mrs. Sterling received them warmly, and drawing their chairs about the ruddy fire told, between them, the story of the afternoon. The pastor was greatly pleased at the recital; pleased that his new recruits had done so well in their first engagement, and pleased that they had been appreciated and secured a welcome for themselves when they went again.

"A grand beginning, brothers," he cried, exultantly. "You have found a field white unto the harvest, and with God's blessing, many precious sheaves will assuredly be garnered from it. I love to look far ahead. I have great

faith in the future, and it is my earnest belief that if we follow up faithfully the work begun to-day, before many years are past we will have flourishing churches established in the very midst of those neighborhoods that now have not even a Sunday school. Let that thought renew your strength and courage if they should seem to fail you at any time; for of course you will meet with discouragements. It will not be always as plain sailing as it was to-day, you know."

"And now that your labors are over for the day," added Mrs. Sterling, "you must all stay and take tea with us."

The invitation was gladly accepted, and then the talk went on, the Institute and its different lines of work being the one sufficient subject.

One feature of the inside work in which Donald took a lively interest, and which was to prove exceedingly useful, was the social and intellectual department. The organizers of the Institute of course clearly realized that there were many young men among the congregation for whom the religious work would as yet have very little attraction, or maybe none at all. Yet they were the very ones who ought to be particularly taken into account. Preparing the way for the founding of future churches in the suburbs was grand good work, but if it were to be looked after while the most important element in the community—the young men who would in time be the leaders in the different lines of life—was being allowed to look after itself, a serious error would be made.

Into this error Mr. Sterling and his associates did not fall. Side by side with the provision for religious activity, careful provision was made to meet desires for social and intellectual intercourse. Monday night had been decided upon as the regular night of meeting, and it was arranged that the character of the service should be alternate, the religious department being responsible for one Monday and the social and intellectual department for the other, and so on through the season.

By unanimous vote, Donald had been elected chairman of the committee in charge of the latter department, and he entered heart and soul into the necessary work. His experience with his reading class at Rivervale now stood him in good stead. It had shown him clearly how general was the desire for mental improvement, and the way in which it might be developed. If the plain farmer folk of the settlement had appreciated their opportunity so keenly, how much more would the bright, shrewd, sharp clerks of the city. The methods would, of course, be different, but the principle underlying them would be the same.

Associating with him half a dozen young men who had been pointed out by Mr. Sterling as competent helpers, Donald went to work to arrange for a course of readings and debates, that would give full opportunity for the members of the Institute to exercise their intellectual powers according to their inclinations. In this task Mr. Randall proved a most valuable lieutenant, and with occasional aid from Mr. Sterling, a programme was ere

long mapped out that, if only taken up in the same spirit as that in which it was projected, would certainly prove a means of much benefit, as well as enjoyment, to those attending the meetings.

Thus the Young Men's Institute was not only launched, but successfully started on its voyage. . As might be expected, it had to stand much criticism and endure "the obloquy of newness" for a time. But if ever an innovation justified itself this one did, and the day was to come when the most persistent croakers would dare croak no longer, and those who had coldly held back would sorely regret that they had not taken hold at the outset, in order that they might have some share in the good results achieved.

CHAPTER XX.

HONORS ON A NEW FIELD.

WITH his entrance into active religious work, there came to Donald a sense of the grandeur and joy of life such as he had never known before. It was as though he had been making his way along a road from which but commonplace views were to be obtained, and then had suddenly reached a point whence a glorious landscape opened out before him.

Never did the future seem so fair as now. In himself there was the impulse to go up to the help of the Lord, and ready at hand were the opportunities for rendering that help under the most favorable auspices.

For such a nature as his the Institute was peculiarly adapted, and it was but natural that, regarding it from his own standpoint, he felt convinced that it could be adapted to all young men; and he made a promise to himself that he would do his best to introduce it at the Beechmount Baptist Church while he was home for the vacation. Since he had come to Chebucto, the venerable Dr. Sternhold had at last seen fit to resign his charge; and his successor in the pulpit, a young man as full of life and energy and modern ideas as the other had been lacking in them, was reported upon by Mrs. Grant in glowing terms of praise.

"I am longing for you to come home, Donald," she wrote, "for I want you to know Mr. Brookfield, and Mr. Brookfield to know my boy. I am sure you will take to one another at once. He is a splendid man."

From all accounts that came to him, Mr. Brookfield would be just the one to enter enthusiastically into such a scheme as the Institute if he deemed it feasible; and Donald looked forward with pleasant anticipations to the time when he would have the opportunity of presenting it to him.

In the meantime his days and nights were fully occupied. In no degree were his studies permitted to suffer through his interest in other things. He considered that they held the first claim upon his time, and he had no thought of refusing to honor it. But he put careful method into his affairs. He planned his time so well that without neglecting any branch of his college work he could attend to the new demand upon his energies. In fact, in them he found recreation rather than labor. They were so different from the routine of the university, and so full of interest to him that they did not weary; they refreshed him.

Nor did he neglect other modes of recreation. He brought his fondness for athletics to the city with him, and found full scope for the exercise of all his physical energies in the football games, which were a regular feature of college life until the frost closed the season; and then in the skating, for which the many lakes and ponds afforded an inviting field.

Before the football season ended he won no small reputation as a player. The game had been played in an imperfect form at the academy, and he discovered that he had a good deal to learn when he first played with the students; but with characteristic vigor he set himself to master the novel intricacies and by the end of a month he was thoroughly posted in all the rules of the play.

The great event of each football season was the match between the city club and the university—the Town and Gown match as it was called. This always took place on Thanksgiving day if the weather permitted, and, if not, on the first favorable Saturday afternoon following. Donald had not been many times out to practice before the captain of the university club, one of the juniors, by name Brownrigg, noticing the vigor and judgment of his play, decided upon him as a promising candidate for the team.

“I hope you will put in regular practice between now and Thanksgiving, Grant,” said he, as they walked home from the field one afternoon. “I need at least three more good men to make up my team, and none of the new fellows play the game that you do. With some more practice you will make a capital quarter-back.”

Greatly elated at this pleasant praise from so high an authority, Donald readily promised to be as regular as possible at practice. So every fine afternoon—and all the autumn afternoons are fine in Chebucto—he wended his way to the football field for a good hour of running, dodging, kicking, collaring, tumbling, and tripping, thus

keeping himself in fine physical trim in spite of long hours in the classroom and over his books at home.

As Thanksgiving day drew near, the football match became the all-engrossing subject of interest among the students. The qualifications of each possible member of the team were canvassed and criticised as though the fate of the country depended on their wit and wind and limb. Captain Brownrigg had many eager applicants for the few vacancies there were to fill. Donald, however, was not among these. He felt within himself that he ought to be in the team, but he did not say so even to Mr. Munroe. If he were asked, he would promptly consent. If he were passed by, only he would know of his disappointment.

The rule was for the team to be made up a full week before the match, and then to play together in the succeeding practice. Donald's hopes were high as he hastened out to the field on the afternoon when the captain's selection would be made known. He did want with all his heart to be a player in the great annual match.

He had been detained some little time by Prof. Madill keeping him after the lecture for a talk, and when he arrived the play seemed about to commence. His heart sank within him.

"There, now," he exclaimed, bitterly, "I have not been chosen. The sides are already made up, and they are just beginning to play. I have half a mind to turn back."

Just at that moment, Captain Brownrigg, who had been looking anxiously about, caught sight of him as he stood irresolute. At once he beckoned frantically to him, shouting loudly :

“Hurry up, Grant, we're all waiting for you. Get off your coat, quick.”

The revulsion of feeling wrought by this greeting fairly electrified Donald, and in a trice hat and coat were thrown aside and he stood ready for action.

“You are to play quarter-back on the right side of the scrimmage, Grant,” were Brownrigg's directions. “Play your prettiest now. They are nearly two to our one.”

The plan adopted was for the team to play together against the rest, no matter how many they might be, and after this fashion the practice went on every afternoon up to the day of the match.

Donald felt very proud of having been chosen, and particularly because so arduous and important a position had been assigned to him. He would have full opportunity to exercise his speed and endurance to the utmost, and the morning of Thanksgiving found him in such a state of excitement that it must be confessed he heard very little of Mr. Sterling's sermon, and remembered less.

The day proved as fine as heart could wish, bright and clear, cool enough to render exertion easy, but not so chilly as to make spectators uncomfortable. The match took place upon the grounds of the city club, and early

in the afternoon the stands were filled with spectators representing both the university and the city. Promptly at three o'clock the two teams appeared on the field and were greeted with a round of cheers. The college colors were black and yellow, those of their opponents, the Wanderers, black and red. Both sets of players looked extremely well as they took up their positions, the students seeming a somewhat heavier lot, the Wanderers more wiry and agile. By mutual consent Prof. McLeod was appointed referee. He had been a famous player in his college days, and the city boys had no less confidence in his impartiality than in his knowledge of the game.

It would take too long to follow closely the course of the contest. Amid cheers and shouts and college cries, the thirty strong and swift young men battled earnestly, but good-humoredly, for the possession of the leather spheroid; and now fortune favored the black and red, and again it veered around to the side of the black and gold. During the first half no point was gained on either side, so evenly were the teams matched, and after the usual rest they took their places again, each man determined that something decisive should be done.

After fifteen minutes of intense and exciting struggling, a tremendous volley of cheers announced that the Wanderers had won a touchdown. They had slowly forced the ball into their opponents' territory. The University full-back had fumbled the ball at a critical moment, and their lightning quarter-back, an amateur sprinter of renown, had made the most of the opportu-

nity. Happily, however, the place-kick failed, and the touchdown was not converted into a goal. Then the two teams nerved themselves for a final struggle, and then, as it happened, came Donald's opportunity.

He had been doing grand work up to this point. Many a charging Wanderer had he cleverly tackled and stopped in his wild career. Many a useful plunge into, or dodge around, the opposing rush line had he made, gaining more or less good yards every time. But not one favorable chance for a run into the goal presented itself until within five minutes of the end of the last half.

The ball had been worked down by the black and red inside the University twenty-five yard line, and the aspect of affairs was decidedly blue. Confident of securing another touchdown, the Wanderers' captain signalled for it to be snapped back out of the scrimmage to the light-footed sprinter. The latter snatched it up and started to run around the rush line, while the rushers of his team pressed forward to support him.

Donald, grasping the situation in an instant, darted like an arrow to meet the runner, and as they met he struck the ball, held tight under the other's arm, a sharp blow with the palm of his hand that sent it flying from his grip. Hardly had it touched the ground than, quick as a flash, he picked it up and started for the Wanderers' goal, while the whole mass of spectators broke out into a wild roar of delight at the brilliancy of the feat.

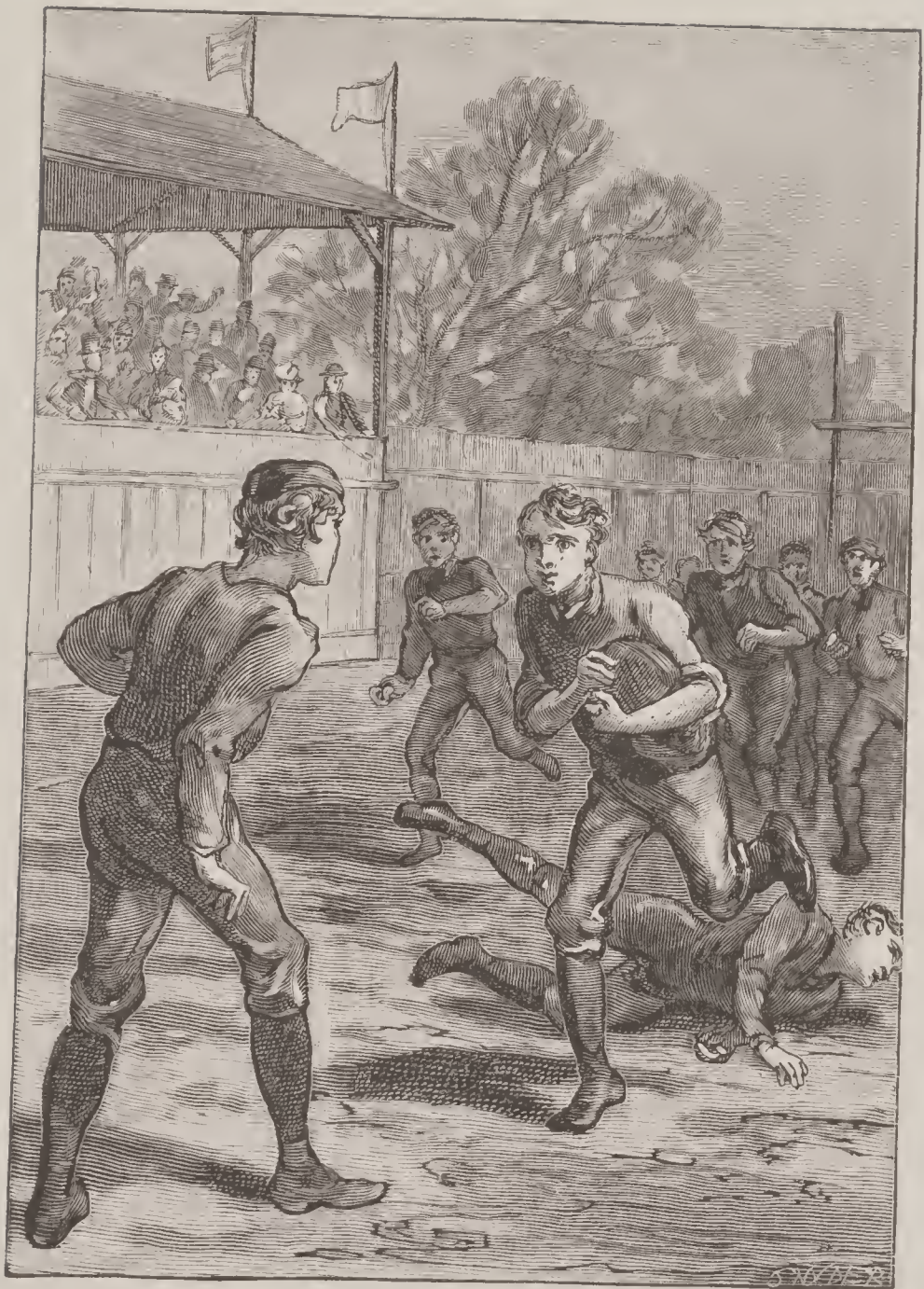
Only two of his opponents were between him and the

goal—the half-back and the full-back or goal keeper; and the former, having imagined that the play would be on the other side of the field, had to run diagonally in order to meet him. This half-back was a sure tackler but a slow dodger, and Donald, as he ran, conceived his action accordingly.

Hard as he had been working hitherto, he was still comparatively fresh and strong; for he possessed rare powers of endurance. Inspired now by the prospect of winning a touchdown that could hardly fail to be made into a goal, and thrilled as with electricity by the shouts of the spectators rolling across the field in great waves of sound, he shot down the open space at a speed that left all the other players hopelessly behind.

Bearing down upon him from the left came the Wanderers' half-back, his face set in fierce determination. Once his powerful grip fastened on the daring runner, his career would be brought to a full stop. But that was not to be. Just as, with arm outstretched, he sought to hurl himself upon the black and yellow jersey, Donald suddenly stopped short and then darted off to the left, while his foiled opponent, missing his grip, pitched forward prone upon the turf; and the almost frenzied on-lookers rose from their seats, yelling and screaming as though they would fain split their throats.

The full-back, seeing his comrade's downfall, now planted himself right in front of the goal posts, resolved not to charge until he was quite sure as to Donald's direction. On came the latter, the ball held tight under his



Donald Grant.

arm, and every nerve and muscle strained to their utmost. At what he thought to be the proper moment the goal keeper threw himself upon him. Instead of evading the charge, Donald met it squarely. The two collided with a thud that was audible half-way down the field. For one thrilling instant they seemed to be inextricably tangled up, then Donald, still retaining the ball, was seen to roll out of his opponent's grasp, to pick himself up with panther-like agility, and although staggering slightly,—for the shock had told upon him,—to complete his wonderful run by pressing onward until he was right behind the centre of the goal, where he touched the ball fairly down just one moment before the fleet sprinter precipitated himself upon his back, flattening him out on top of the ball!

Never had such cheers been heard on the Wanderers' field before as then made the welkin ring. The fact that a University player had secured what would probably be a decisive advantage did not lessen one whit the vigor of the applause of the Wanderers' friends; and the students, it need hardly be said, became for the moment something akin to howling dervishes.

Then came a lull; for the place-kick was to be tried and all held their breath to watch the issue of the attempt. Captain Brownrigg took the responsibility, and with a gentle kick sent the ball in graceful, parabolic flight over the very centre of the crossbar. Once more cheers broke out. It was a beautiful goal, and the black and yellow now had the best of the game.

In the few minutes of play that remained the Wanderers made heroic exertions to add some more points to their score, but in vain ; and the final result was a goal as against a " try " in favor of the University.

The moment Professor McLeod called "time," the members of his team made a rush for Donald, lifted him up on their shoulders, and bore him to the pavilion in triumph, where a perfect ovation awaited him at the hands of his opponents, who showered congratulations upon him for his splendid run.

Many a good game of football did he have after that, and many a hardly contested match did he take part in ; for, like a wise youth, he kept up his interest in that fine form of physical exercise to the end of his university course. But never again had he the opportunity to achieve quite so brilliant a performance as at his first match, and the story of that wonderful run is still told at Chebucto and the scene of it pointed out to admiring Freshmen.

Not long after the football season closed the skating season opened. Chebucto offered every possible facility to the skater for the enjoyment of that glorious sport. About the city, aside from the covered rinks, there were numerous ponds, large and small, which asked but little frost to turn them into shining mirrors ; and then by crossing the harbor and walking a mile into the country, you reached a chain of lakes lying amid forests of spruce and pine, upon which you could speed for mile after mile into the heart of a romantic wilderness.

There was always plenty of skating at Rivervale, and Donald had mastered the art in a rather rough, rustic fashion, perhaps, but sufficiently well to make the exercise a pure delight to him. One morning at Chebucto, after the Frost King had been busy for some days, Donald found by his place at the breakfast table a package which, on being opened, proved to be a beautiful pair of spring skates—a present from his ever-thoughtful friend.

“My skating days are over,” said he, when Donald warmly thanked him. “I was very fond of the exercise once. But now I shall have to do it by deputy, and I want you to be my deputy this winter. You will think the lake a perfect fairyland if I am not much mistaken.”

CHAPTER XXI.

A TIMELY SERVICE.

ON the first Saturday that was favorable for skating on the lake Donald, with two of his fellow-students, set out for this "fairy land," as Mr. Munroe had called it. The afternoon was a glorious one, and having left the smoke and dust and din of the city far behind, they were presently standing at the foot of the first lake.

Straight before them and spreading out on either hand lay a glistening expanse, whose polished surface, as it flashed back the bright sunshine, seemed to be saying, "Come and enjoy me. I am to be trusted implicitly."

Three unbroken miles in length and more than one in width, the icy plain awaited them in its virgin purity. With feverish haste they snapped their Acmes on and dashed laughingly upon the ice.

"Now, fellows," shouted Donald, as he shot away, "let us see who can get to the head of the lake first."

His companions promptly responded to the challenge, and the three were in a moment reveling in the supremest luxury of motion. The crisp, cool air seemed charged with electricity, and the blood bounded through their throbbing pulses.

"Isn't it simply glorious?" cried Donald, as they sped on toward the farther shore, every stroke of their steel-

shod feet counting for a good three yards at least. He was in an ecstasy of delight, and put forth such exertions as to nearly distance his companions.

Presently the fir-clad shores drew together until they seemed to meet and put a bar to further progress. But no—a cunning turn to the right, a quick dash over the dangerous spot where the restless current prevented the ice from growing as thick as it ought to be, and behold, Donald was out upon the second lake, still larger than the first, and dotted here and there with tiny evergreen islets that looked like emeralds in a silver setting.

He waited for the others here, and then the three went on more slowly together, exploring the passages between the islets and the snug sequestered coves that broke the shore line of the lake. It was an experience of unalloyed enjoyment for Donald. He had never before found such delight in skating, and he felt profoundly grateful to Mr. Munroe for providing him with the means of obtaining such inspiring pleasure.

But this afternoon was to be memorable to him not only because of the happiness the skating afforded him. He was to render a service to Prof. Thomson, the one-armed Professor of Classics at Chebucto University, that made the day one not to be forgotten by either his teacher or himself. This was the way in which it came about.

There were a good many skaters on the lakes that afternoon, and among them was Professor Thomson, who did not allow his loss of one arm to put any restraint upon the use of his two legs, and was accordingly quite

an enthusiastic skater. As the early dusk of the winter evening came on, Donald's companions thought that they had all better be getting home, but he was very loth to leave the lakes that seemed even more fascinating with the deepening shadows throwing a veil of mystery about their distant reaches than they did in the full glory of the sunshine. So he bade them push on ahead, and he would, after a little, catch up with them.

This was near the top of the second lake, and when the other two took him at his word he was left quite alone as he thought, and he found a peculiar pleasure in being so. For a little while he dallied in the apparent solitude of ice, and then with a sigh of regret that he had to leave it turned to follow his companions.

He had not gone many yards when there came to him through the still evening air a sound that seemed strangely like the cry of "Help!" He wheeled about and peered eagerly in the direction whence the sound came, but could make out nothing save a dark spot on the ice in one of the coves that suggested nothing human; so swinging round he struck out once more, when again the cry of "Help! help!" this time repeated so that there could be no mistake about it, smote upon his ears.

He was not one to refuse any such appeal, and as the dark spot in the cove seemed to be the only possible source of the cry, he hastened toward it with strenuous strokes. As he neared it, he saw a human form, and coming closer was amazed to recognize the long, sharp face and attenuated figure of Professor Thomson.

"Ah, Grant," said the professor in a tone of relief, yet without any trace of pain or anxiety, "I am very glad you heard me. I am very much afraid I have broken my leg, and you will have to help me off the ice, and get me back to town somehow."

As much taken aback by the composed way in which this was said as by what it meant, Donald stammered out, "Broken your leg, sir. Surely not."

In spite of his suffering, Professor Thomson smiled at his earnestness. "There is no doubt at all about it, Grant. My right leg is broken just above the ankle. How can you get me to the road, do you think?"

Donald looked about him. There was not even a board within sight out of which a sort of toboggan might have been extemporized. He was nonplussed for the moment, and regarded the helpless professor lying there so patiently in blank bewilderment. Suddenly a scheme flashed into his mind that seemed feasible.

"Just wait a moment, sir," said he. "I think I can manage it."

Darting over to one of the islets, he pulled out his pocket knife and proceeded to cut down a small spruce, about the size of an ordinary Christmas tree. Hastening back to Professor Thomson with this, he unfolded his plan. "I am afraid it will hurt dreadfully, sir," said he, "but I cannot think of anything better. If you will just put your arm around this tree and hold on tight, I will drag it down the lake until we reach the road, where we will no doubt be able to get a wagon."

The professor looked at the tree and smiled. "It is not for those in such desperate straits as I am at this moment to be over particular," said he. "That will not make an easy conveyance, but it seems the best we can do."

So, without a groan or murmur, although the agony must have been indescribable, he clasped the spruce tightly, and Donald, seizing it by the butt, set out sturdily upon his toilsome task. It was a tremendous undertaking for both; but the only alternative was to leave the injured man upon the ice.

Right manfully Donald tugged away, and most heroically the professor bore his suffering until at last, after many pauses for rest, the bottom of the second lake was reached. Here, to the great joy of both, there were some other skaters still lingering. These gladly came to Donald's assistance, and he, leaving the professor in their hands, went on to the foot of the lake where there were some houses beside the road. At one of these he obtained an express wagon. In the bottom of this was placed a thick mattress and plenty of blankets, and so the sufferer was taken carefully to his home.

In spite of the trying circumstances surrounding his accident, Professor Thomson recovered from its effects with remarkable rapidity, and seemed never to weary of manifesting his gratitude to Donald for the timely service he had rendered him. He presented him with a handsome volume as a memento of the occasion, and throughout the whole of his college course showed warm

interest in him that was very much appreciated by Donald himself.

Thus, in study and in recreation, in work for himself, and in work for the church of Christ, the winter months slipped rapidly and happily away. Donald's letters home—and he was a faithful correspondent—were always full of bright description and cheery comment that made them the delight of the home at Rivervale. The whole settlement there was interested in his career, and it even extended to the village, where Mr. Patterson received regular accounts of the progress of his favorite pupil.

CHAPTER XXII.

A YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHURCH.

“**W**HAT a regular steam engine you are, Donald!” said Mr. Munroe to him one evening, with an admiring look. “You go straight on day after day and night after night, without ever seeming to get tired or wanting to rest for a while just for a little change. What with your studies and your church services and your Institute, you are as busy as a bee in clover time. You really make me feel ashamed of myself—poor useless idler that I am.”

The last words were spoken with a shade of bitterness in the tone that did not escape Donald, and he answered them rather than what went before them.

“Indeed you are not a poor useless idler,” he cried, indignantly. “If any one else than you dared to say that I would knock him down. What would I ever have done without you? and I am not by any means the only one to whom you have been good. I have heard more about your kind and generous doings than perhaps you imagine.”

A wonderfully pleased look came into Mr. Munroe's pale face, chasing away the frown that it had worn the moment before.

“My dear boy,” said he, earnestly, “it is very good of

you to say such nice things, and they do me good, because I know you mean them; and it is an inspiration to find you putting so much faith in me. For whatever help it has been my good fortune to be able to render you, Donald, you have already repaid me a hundred fold. The very way you go about your work stirs me up and makes me desirous of being some kind of a worker myself."

They had a long talk together on this line that night, in the course of which Donald—as delicately as possible, for he knew his friend's sensitive nature—urged him to seek in religious work the field of work he felt he ought to enter; and although Mr. Munroe with graceful skill parried his arguments, yet not in any way making light of them, there was something in his manner and spirit that caused Donald to feel very hopeful that this would be the outcome ere long, and to pray for his friend henceforth with stronger faith than ever before.

In his Institute work Donald found increasing pleasure. The Sunday afternoon meetings were becoming such a success that they now had to be held in a hall in order to accommodate the congregation, and the people were already talking of putting up a building during the summer in which Sunday-school as well as service could be held.

He had no difficulty in obtaining assistance from other members of the Institute in the carrying on of the meetings. Indeed, so many were willing to lend a hand that an evening service during the week was also established, which soon grew to satisfactory proportions.

The inside work of the Institute was no less successful. The Monday evening meetings steadily increased in interest, and Mr. Sterling had cause for no other feelings than pride and satisfaction in regard to the new departure.

"There will be other churches in this city and elsewhere following our example before long," he said to Donald, as they walked home together one evening. I have had several of my fellow-pastors making inquiries of me, and have even had letters from other places on the same subject. Believe me, Grant, the day is not far distant when no self-respecting church will consider itself properly organized without something like our Institute. What a glorious day for our church that will be when its young people, no longer confined to the limited sphere of the Sunday-school, but admitted into participation in active work to the full extent of their capabilities, come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty forces of evil, singing and shouting in all the ardor and hopefulness of their young strength! God grant that I may live to see it."

Donald listened with glistening eyes. It was an inspiring prospect that the preacher outspread before him.

"Indeed, I hope you will, sir," he responded, fervently. "And that I will too. As soon as I can after I get home, I am going to see if an Institute cannot be started in connection with our church in the village. Old Dr. Sternhold resigned some time ago, you know, and there

has come in his place a young man—Mr. Brookfield—who mother says is just full of life and spirit, and the very kind of man to take hold of such a thing heartily.”

“Be sure you do, Grant,” answered Mr. Sterling, giving him an affectionate clap on the back. “I know something of Brookfield, and he is just the man to take a good grip of a new idea like our Institute. If you will let me know when you are about to open fire on the subject, I will write him a letter telling him my experience.”

“Oh, that will be capital!” exclaimed Donald. “I will certainly let you know when to write.”

And so it was settled between them that they two would do their best to assist in getting an Institute organized at Beechmount during the university vacation.

This vacation was not far off now, and with the nearing of the close of the college year Donald's devotion to his studies increased. He allowed himself no other recreation than he found in religious work, and early and late bent over his books, preparing for the approaching examinations.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CLOSE OF THE COLLEGE YEAR.

THE university examinations were held during the last two weeks of the month of April in each year. Only written examinations were held. The time did not permit of oral ones, and a high standard of excellence was required in the answers.

Donald's chief, indeed it might be said only, anxiety so far at least as "passing" was concerned, was the examination in mathematics. With regard to the other subjects he rightly enough felt quite at ease. What worried him most about the mathematics was that the more he worked at them the more confused his mind seemed to get. The hard problems became only harder, and the much desired solutions all the more aggravatingly evasive as he knitted his brows over them night after night.

In this emergency there came to him relief from an unexpected quarter. Among his classmates was one with whom he had never been able to become in any wise intimate. He was a Scotch school teacher from a remote country district, who seemed to have no desire to make the acquaintance of any one of his fellow-students. He lived entirely to himself, and was evidently as poor as he was proud. But he was a marvel at mathematics.

If he was strong in mathematics, however, he was weak in classics. His early opportunities had been very slight. It was all hard, uphill fighting for him, and without Donald knowing it, this man, by name Lindsay, had been watching the ease with which *he* surmounted the difficulties of translation or grammar that bewildered him.

To Donald, then, one day just a fortnight before the examinations, came this man, and in his own awkward, abrupt way made a proposal that the other accepted without hesitation.

"Mr. Grant," said he, with a curiously eager look in his dark gray eyes as though he greatly feared the failure of his mission, "you have no trouble with your classics. They seem to come naturally to you just as mathematics do to me. But you don't find the mathematics quite so easy, any more than I do the classics. So I thought perhaps we might help each other if you would be willing. There is a whole fortnight yet. Could we manage to work together for a couple of hours each day? We would go over all the work, you know, and what one did not know the other could tell him."

As much delighted as surprised by this unlooked-for but most welcome request, Donald answered, heartily:

"That is a splendid idea, Mr. Lindsay, and I am so glad you have proposed it. I have many a time envied you the way you would polish off those dreadful problems as if you thought them fun, and I am sure you can help me immensely in getting ready for the examinations;

and of course I will be only too glad to help you all I can in the classics." It was accordingly so arranged.

With a much lighter heart, Donald toiled away at his books, and presently the examinations began. It was, however, upon the whole an anxious fortnight. Mr. Munroe noticed this, and rallied him about it.

"What on earth are you worrying about, Donald?" said he, apropos of a tremendous sigh that had just escaped from the other's breast. "Surely you do not mean to pretend that you are troubled in mind as to how you will come out. My dear boy, you just ought to be ashamed of yourself. I know you work with all your might, and I have good reason to believe that you do not forget to pray." It was a wise and well-meant reproof, and Donald made no attempt to evade it.

On the eagerly anticipated day when the results would be declared, Donald's heart was thumping against his ribs as he pushed his way through the crowd and at last succeeded in getting in front of the blackboard, which was placed in the corridor of the university. With anxious eye he scanned the momentous lists. The first one he caught sight of was mathematics.

"Hurrah!" he exclaimed, "I have gotten a good second class."

Then he hunted for the modern languages. "Better still!" was the joyful cry, "I am in the first class."

A little distance away were the classics and literature lists, side by side. By dint of an extra effort he got before them. And now he felt like flinging his hat to the

ceiling and hurrahing at the top of his voice ; for this is what the lists told him :

In English literature he stood easily first, with a percentage of ninety-two, and in classics he was also first with a percentage of ninety-five !

Many were the congratulations he received upon his winning two prizes ; for although these were never very costly affairs, it was the honor, not the value, that the students regarded.

" I am as proud of you as if you were my own brother, Donald," said Mr. Munroe, on hearing the good news. " Dear me ! " he added, " some day, I suppose, when you have become famous and I, if still alive, am just an insignificant useless individual, people will be saying about me, ' That is poor Munroe. He used to be the great Mr. Grant's teacher, and now see how his pupil has outstripped him. ' "

Donald laughed merrily at this, for he saw it was only said in jest.

" You are altogether too hard on yourself, Mr. Munroe," he responded. " I don't think there is much fear of your only claim to fame being that once upon a time you were my teacher. You will have something far better than that to boast of before you are many years older. "

Mr. Munroe smiled and shook his head in mock despondency.

" It is very good of you to say so, Donald, but I am afraid you are a partial prophet, and you like to predict

what you know will be pleasing. However," he added, in a lighter tone, "maybe there is a good time coming even for me. Let us talk about something of more importance. When do you intend to start for home?"

Donald's intention was to start the morning after Convocation; but his friend stoutly objected, as he had planned to give a dinner in his honor on the evening of that day, and he was determined to carry out his purpose. So Donald was persuaded to postpone his departure for one day.

The Convocation ceremonies were very brilliant and Donald, the only student to carry off two class prizes, came in for thundering rounds of applause when he went up to the platform to receive the books that were awarded him.

Mr. Munroe's dinner the following evening was a delightful success. Among the guests, of whom there were no less than twenty, were nearly all the professors of the university, and several of the students who had distinguished themselves; nor did the ever-thoughtful host overlook Mr. Lindsay, to whom the perfectly appointed entertainment was something of a revelation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOME MISSIONARY WORK.

NEXT morning Donald bade good-bye to his kind friend, though not before he had received his promise to pay Rivervale a visit during the summer, and began his journey homeward. He was in the happiest possible frame of mind. The whole world seemed to him as full of hope, of cheer, of brilliant prospects, as it was of sunshine on that glorious spring morning. He felt like smiling into the face of every one he met, and telling something of the good fortune that had befallen him.

Among the passengers was an old gentleman who, after watching him for some time with evident interest, at last addressed him as he was passing down the aisle of the car:

"Pardon me," said he, with grave courtesy, "but are you not a son of Grant, the carpenter, of Rivervale?"

"I am, sir," answered Donald, recognizing in his questioner, Mr. Miller, the wealthy banker of Beechmount.

"You have been attending the university, I believe," continued Mr. Miller. "I would like to hear how you succeeded. Sit here beside me and tell me, won't you?"

"I will with pleasure, sir," replied Donald, glad to find some one to whom to speak his mind; and taking his seat beside the banker he entered into a graphic

account of his life at Chebucto, describing the university, its different professors, the Debating Society, and the students, and so on for hour after hour while the train sped swiftly onward.

During the remainder of the journey Mr. Miller kept Donald at his side, and when the coach which they had taken at New Edinburgh dashed down the main street of Beechmount in its usual impressive manner, and drew up before the door of the principal hotel, he shook hands with him very cordially, saying :

"I have enjoyed your company greatly, Donald Grant; you have made what would otherwise have been a tedious journey very pleasant for me. I shall want to see more of you. You may hear from me again before long."

Donald knew enough of the old banker to understand that such warm, kind words came very rarely from his thin, firm lips, and that therefore he had a right to feel highly complimented. When he repeated to his father what Mr. Miller had said, Mr. Grant opened his eyes in wonderment.

"Why, Donald, my son," he exclaimed, "you surely have found what many another has looked for in vain, and that is the way into old Mr. Miller's heart. I never knew of words like those coming from his mouth before. But you have always been a rare hand at making friends," he added, giving his son a glowing glance of proud affection.

The big express wagon with Mr. and Mrs. Grant, Hugh,

the eldest, and Meg, the youngest, member of the family, had come into the village to meet the coach, and the loving greetings showered upon Donald fairly brought the tears to his eyes.

"If the folks at home were so glad to have him back, was it not selfish of him to go away at all," he thought.

For a week he gave himself up to idling, pure and simple, and then he began to consider what he would do during the long months of vacation. He could, to be sure, make himself useful at home by assisting in the farmwork; but if it were possible, he wanted to obtain some employment that would be remunerative, and thus enable him to add to the slender fund upon which he had to depend to pay his way through the university.

This, however, would be no easy matter. There were no schools requiring teachers, and no position vacant in any of the village stores. It seemed, therefore, as though he would have to give up the idea when the mail-bag, one evening, had a letter for him in an unfamiliar hand, which proved to be from Mr. Miller.

"I would like to see you at your first opportunity. I have something to propose to you that may be to your advantage."

That was all. Mr. Miller was a man of few words. But Donald needed nothing more, and somehow divining what the banker had in view, went off the next morning, bright and early, to call upon him.

He was very graciously received, and after some general conversation, Mr. Miller made known his object in

sending for him. Hitherto, he had attended to his banking business without any assistance, but he was beginning to find it too onerous, especially during the summer season when the bulk of the village business was done. He accordingly thought he would allow himself a clerk, and if Donald cared to accept the position, it was open to him at a salary of ten dollars per week until he had to return to college.

How Donald's heart leaped for joy as he listened to Mr. Miller stating this in his calm, deliberate way! It was a most attractive offer in every respect, and without a moment's hesitation he accepted it, at the same time expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the thoughtful kindness that had prompted its being made.

This was the beginning of Donald's clerkship, which continued to the entire satisfaction of his employer and himself up to within a few days of his return to Chebucto.

He now found himself in a particularly favorable position for carrying out the purpose he had brought from Chebucto with him, namely, the organizing of an institute in connection with the Baptist Church of Beechmount. He had made the acquaintance of Mr. Brookfield, the new pastor, shortly after his return, and had at once been warmly attracted to him, just as his mother predicted.

On making known his idea to Mr. Brookfield, he had been met with a very hearty response. The young pastor, eager to meet the needs of his congregation at all points, so far as possible, had been giving much thought

to the young men, who seemed to have no better way of spending their evenings than to lounge about the hotel steps, or loiter aimlessly around the post-office, if they did no worse. His heart went out to them in great longing to bring them under better influences, and the scheme of the institute seemed to him full of promise in that very direction.

"I cannot thank you enough, Mr. Grant, for the new ideas you have given me, and I trust I may count upon your kind assistance in putting them into practice here. I will write to Mr. Sterling without delay, to ask his counsel, and I feel very sanguine of great good coming out of this scheme, if it is only faithfully carried out."

But, of course, this meant delay. In the meantime, however, Donald was not idle. His business position brought him into constant contact with other clerks, and he lost no opportunity of cultivating their acquaintance, so that it was not long before he knew the majority of the young men of Beechmount. More than this, whenever the chance presented itself, he sought to arouse in them a desire for self-improvement. He dilated upon the delights of reading, and offered freely the loan of his books. He also had much to say about the Institute of Calvary Church, and how interesting its meetings were, the lively debates they had, and the enjoyable evenings of music and readings and addresses.

Thus he sowed the seed during the summer months, co-operating with Mr. Brookfield in the work of preparing the way for the public submission of the scheme, which

would take place as soon as the approach of autumn turned people's thoughts indoors, so to speak.

It was an exceedingly happy summer for all the occupants of the white cottage at Rivervale. Business had been brisk in the shop for some time past, the farm gave promise of unusually fine crops, and everybody was in the best of health and spirits.

To make the family circle and the family joy complete, Charlie, the sailor boy, one day made his appearance and was welcomed with exuberant rejoicing. His ship was laid up for repairs at a neighboring port, and the captain, in whose favor he stood high, had kindly given him a fortnight's leave to visit his home.

He had grown into a handsome youth during his year at sea, and the mother's heart was glad that her keen eyes detected no signs of any falling into evil habits; the happy truth being that in spite of all temptation he had been sturdily faithful to the pledge given his father before he went away, and had come back with as clear a record as he took away with him.

He, of course, at once divided with Donald the attentions of the household and of the neighbors, but Donald was not jealous. He felt as proud of his handsome sailor brother as Charlie did of his brilliant student brother, and the two were united by the closest affection.

Charlie's passion for the sea had not been diminished by actual experience of its peril and hardships. On the contrary, he was more enthusiastic than ever; and in view of his quick intelligence, his dauntless courage, his exem-

plary character, and high ambition, there seemed no reason to doubt that if no mischance befell him, he would within a few years be in command himself instead of serving under another.

About the beginning of August, Mr. Munroe paid his promised visit and remained for a month at Rivervale, where his gentle, genial manner made him increasingly beloved. He was much interested in the scheme of starting an institute in the village, and promised if it were carried out, to contribute a number of books that might form the nucleus of a library for the use of the members. Before he went away, he made Donald promise to spend another winter with him in Chebucto.

"You are really necessary to my happiness, Donald," he said in his sweet, half-serious, half-humorous way. "And I could not bear the idea of your being in the same city with me and not under my roof."

Donald, in truth, was but too glad to consent, so that the matter did not take long to settle.

Mr. Brookfield and he had decided that early in September would be the right time to launch the proposed institute. Accordingly, on the first Sunday of that month, the pastor announced that a meeting would be held for the purpose on the following Tuesday evening. By this time the leading members of the congregation had been thoroughly canvassed, and either their support secured, or their curiosity aroused in advance. There was therefore good reason to expect a large attendance at the meeting.

Among others whom Donald had sought to interest was his employer. Mr. Miller seemed fond of drawing him into conversation, and even of having discussions with him on various subjects, so that he had no difficulty in introducing the subject of the institute. But the banker appeared very sceptical, if not indeed contemptuous.

"I have little faith in that notion," he said, with one of his grim smiles. "It will last only until the novelty wears off, and then the cry will be for something newer."

Of course, Donald protested that there was not the slightest fear of anything of the kind occurring, and that the provision for the utilizing of the young people in the extension of the work of the church was a magnificent conception, which could not fail to have the most beneficial results where wisely carried out. He even quoted Mr. Sterling's glowing prophecies as to the future.

To all this Mr. Miller listened without any indication of yielding assent, and Donald decided that no countenance nor assistance could be expected from him, although he was one of the chief financial supports of Mr. Brookfield's church.

The meeting took place on the evening appointed, and in the church itself. To the great delight of the two promoters the building, by eight o'clock, was nearly as full as on a fine Sunday morning. Many, of course, had come out of pure curiosity, but there were also many others present who had become deeply interested in the scheme, through having been talked to about it by either the pastor or Donald.

CHAPTER XXV.

BY WAY OF CONCLUSION.

AFTER devotional exercises Mr. Brookfield briefly stated the object of the meeting, and then called upon Donald for a fuller explanation. As the latter rose to his feet, there was a rustle of excited expectation through the large audience, and every eye was fixed intently upon him. The prophet was in his own country, now, and among his own countrymen; and strange to say, they were prepared to honor him. Accounts of his achievements at Chebucto, in both intellectual and physical spheres, had been from time to time made public by Mr. Patterson, and stirred the pride of the village. Since his return he had, by his frank, natural manner, made friends on all sides, and this was the first opportunity there had been of hearing him speak in public.

By dint of practice, Donald had pretty well gotten the upper hand of the nervousness that tried him so severely in his early efforts; but the present occasion was in many respects so peculiar, that he would have had to be made of adamant if his nerves had not been in a quiver as he faced those who were waiting for his words.

Regardless, however, of his nervousness, Donald, in a steady voice, began his address, and with a sigh of satis-

faction at his promising start, the audience settled down to listen attentively.

His idea had been that he would speak for not more than fifteen or twenty minutes, and confine himself to a description of the Institute at Calvary Church, leaving to Mr. Brookfield the appeal to the people to establish a similar organization in Beechmount. But when he got into the full flow of thought and language, and found his listeners growing more and more interested, he entirely forgot his original purpose, and allowed himself to be carried away by the inspiration of the occasion.

He had just gotten well started when who should quietly enter the church but Mr. Miller. Donald observed his entrance, but it did not disconcert him in the least. On the contrary, he said to himself:

"I am glad Mr. Miller has come in. I will just think I am arguing the case with him alone, and trying to answer all his questions and remove all his objections."

So he thenceforth addressed himself to the banker, who sat listening attentively, with half-shut eyes, from which every now and then he shot quick glances of approval at the youthful speaker. Whatever he thought of his arguments, he certainly was pleased with the manner in which they were being presented.

It was nearly an hour before Donald brought his address to a close, yet there were no signs of flagging interest on the part of his audience. After describing in detail the Calvary Institute, he had gone on to tell of the good work it was doing in the suburbs of the city,

and of the expectations Mr. Sterling confidently held of the fruits of the work. He then gave an attractive account of the intellectual and social features of the Institute's work—of the lively debates, the interesting readings, the good music, and the delightful gatherings, when the members of the congregation met in the church parlors as in a private parlor for purely social intercourse.

Having thus gone well over the ground, he felt an irresistible impulse to continue by making a direct appeal to the young men of Beechmount. He knew every one of them, and the temptations to which they were exposed. He believed with his whole heart that the Institute would help them to meet those temptations, and be of incalculable value in the direction of self-improvement.

With impassioned earnestness, therefore, he besought them to unite heartily with Mr. Brookfield for the good purpose in view, and concluded by announcing the offer made by his friend in Chebucto, of a number of appropriate books to form the nucleus of a library.

When he resumed his seat the people, forgetting for the moment that they were in the church, broke out into a hearty round of applause. His speech had been a complete success, and had made a profound impression, particularly upon the young men, the very ones he was most anxious to influence. They were ready at that moment if the question were put, to vote unanimously for the organization of an Institute right away.

Before inviting the collective opinion of the meeting, however, Mr. Brookfield said, rising to his feet with a

glowing face, for Donald's fervent words had stirred him to the depths, "We have all listened to Mr. Grant's eloquent address with the growing conviction that the time has fully come for the establishment of an Institute in connection with our church, and we cannot be sufficiently grateful to our young brother for the whole-souled way in which he has advocated this admirable scheme, and prepared the way for its being put into execution. And now the meeting is open to our friends. Let there be a free and frank expression of opinion, so that we may understand one another perfectly at the outset."

For a few moments there was silence, and then old Deacon Gooderson, the patriarch of the church, slowly lifted his saintly head, and in a faint yet clear voice, said :

"The sands of my life are fast running out. I can no longer help in good works except by praying for them. but this let me say : I am convinced that this Institute will be a great blessing to us, and my last days will be brighter for the knowledge that it is in our midst. I earnestly trust that it may be established at once."

Others followed in the same strain. There were some questions asked, but no adverse comments of any kind made, and Mr. Brookfield, satisfied that nothing more needed be said, was about to call upon the meeting for a united expression of opinion, when he observed Mr. Miller rising to his feet, and paused in order to give him an opportunity to say what was in his mind.

The banker's voice was not often heard in public, but when he did speak what he said was generally accepted

as conclusive, for there was not a stronger, clearer, wiser head than his in Beechmount, and his wealth, of course, lent additional weight to his opinions.

"I must confess," said he, in his dignified, deliberate way, "that I came here to-night largely out of curiosity. But I have been deeply interested by what I have heard, and am glad to observe that this meeting is about unanimous as to the propriety of giving this new scheme, so vigorously laid before us, a fair trial. I cannot, myself, take any active part in the enterprise, but have much pleasure in offering an annual subscription of one hundred dollars toward its current expenses."

Again the audience broke out into hearty applause. Mr. Miller's speech might not be as eloquent as Donald's, but its concluding sentence completely removed one obstacle that the proposed organization would have to face, namely, the question of expense.

"I feel like calling upon you to join with me in singing the doxology," said Mr. Brookfield, his face beaming with delight, as Mr. Miller took his seat again.

"But before doing that I will ask you to express your feelings in another way. Will all those who are in favor of an Institute being formed in connection with this church, signify it by standing up."

Instantly the entire audience rose, and stood looking at their young pastor.

"Now," he cried, "let us all sing 'Praise God from all blessings flow.'"

Like one person the large gathering burst forth into

the psalm of praise, and the waves of melody went out into the village streets, making the passers-by wonder what kind of a service was going on within.

An hour or more was spent in the election of the officers, the result being that the pastor was chosen as president, Mr. Miller, Mr. Patterson, and Donald as vice-presidents, a middle-aged merchant as treasurer, a live young lawyer as secretary, and six excellent young men to constitute the committee together with half as many ladies.

During the remaining month of his vacation, Donald was indefatigable in promoting the interests of the young society. Hardly a day passed that he and Mr. Brookfield did not consult together concerning it. Mr. Miller paid his first annual subscription as soon as the treasurer was ready to receive it, and by general consent one-half the amount was appropriated to the purchase of periodicals and papers for the reading-room, that was to be an important feature of the Institute's attractions.

Mr. Munroe did not forget his promise, but sent down a goodly case of books,—some from his own shelves, some fresh from the booksellers,—which made a promising start for a library. Especial stress was laid upon the reading room and library because of the conviction of their value in winning young men from the street at night, and thereby bringing them within the circle of religious influence.

The principal feature of the religious work of the Institute was the young people's prayer meeting on Friday evening. It was not deemed expedient to attempt

anything more at the outset, but personal work was constantly urged upon the active members.

By the time Donald had to return to resume his studies at the university, the Institute was in full swing, and giving every promise of unqualified success.

"You have rendered us a service that can never be repaid to you here, my brother," were Mr. Brookfield's parting words. "Your reward must come from above. But the prayers of the Institute will follow you, and God's best blessings will be entreated on your behalf."

Five years! An age in prospect, but dwindling to a span in retrospect. They were busy happy, eventful years for Donald, during which his development, intellectually and spiritually, went steadily forward.

Two of them were spent at the university, where he grew in favor with professors and students alike, until he graduated at the top of his class, and with the highest honors ever conferred in the history of the university.

As a matter of course, his class chose him to deliver the valedictory. He accepted the commission gladly. His college days had been the richest, happiest, most helpful period of his life. He felt himself overflowing with gratitude toward the teachers, with whom his relations had been uninterruptedly cordial, and he evoked round after round of tumultuous applause as, in periods glowing with fervor and admirably modelled, he pictured life at the university as it had presented itself to him.

"The best valedictory we ever heard," was the unanimous verdict of both professors and public.

During his vacations Donald continued to be Mr. Miller's clerk, and each year found him occupying a larger place in the old banker's heart. In the course of the summer following his graduation, Mr. Miller suddenly passed away, leaving a large fortune, the greater portion of which went to religious and benevolent institutions; for he was almost alone in the world. His love for Donald manifested itself in one of the codicils. It was very brief, but entirely to the point; and by it Donald became possessed of the sum of ten thousand dollars, "to be applied by him to the completion of his studies, or in any other way that he might see fit."

When Donald learned of his good fortune he was ready to shout aloud for joy, but not simply on his own account. Like a flash, he made up his mind as to the disposal of this godsend. He would divide it equally with his father, and devote his own half to the completion of his studies as his benefactor had suggested.

Mr. Grant was growing old, and finding the double burden of the shop and farm pressing too heavily upon him. The shop needed a complete outfit of new tools and machinery, the farm was too scant of itself to provide a maintenance. All this Donald knew well, although his brave, loving father would fain hide it from him.

Oh! how delightful it was to be able to say:

"Here, father, are five thousand dollars. Fit out the shop with the best tools and machinery. Double the

bounds of your farm. Buy stock and implements of the most improved kind, and then, with Hugh in the shop, and Bob and Harry on the farm, you can take it easy for the remainder of your days."

Mr. Grant at first protested against accepting the gift, but Donald soon overcame his scruples.

"My dear father," said he, the tears coming into his eyes as he spoke: "would you deny me the sweetest pleasure in this world? Can I ever fully repay you for what you and mother have done for me, and do you think that I could enjoy one dollar of Mr. Miller's legacy if I knew that you were toiling away here under such disadvantages? You know I could not. No—no—father, if you won't take half you must take the whole; for I will not touch a dollar of it on any other conditions."

So Donald had his way. An adjoining farm on the Harbor Road was added to the Grant possessions. Horses and cattle and other stock were purchased, a fine set of farming implements procured, while quiet, faithful Hugh rejoiced in an equipment of tools and machinery that enabled him to successfully compete with any other carriage builder in his territory.

Having thus disposed of one-half his fortune, Donald with the other half continued his preparation for the career he had in view. After much thought and prayer, and consultation with Mr. Sterling, and other friends whose counsel he valued, he had decided to enter the ministry. The divine call seemed clear beyond all question, and his heart responded to it gladly.

To his three years at Chebucto University were added three more at the leading Baptist Theological school in the United States. He was then ordained, and it was surely no mere coincidence that his first call should be to the very church which had, as Mr. Sterling had so confidently predicted, grown out of the work undertaken by him in fear and trembling in connection with the Calvary Church Institute.

One of the largest contributors to the building fund of the new church had been Mr. Munroe, who in an unobtrusive way was administering his estate for the benefit of humanity. Before Donald's course at the university ended, his friend had come to stand with him upon the same enduring foundation of faith, and had dedicated his life to the service of God and his fellowmen. Every meritorious, religious, or charitable enterprise found in him a generous donor, and the list of his benefactions lengthened as his years increased.

And now the time has come to part with Donald Grant. Not that the story of his development reached completion with the beginning of his ministry. That event simply marked a new and higher stage through which, however, we cannot follow him now. Steadfast, zealous, untiring, he labored with rare success, ever finding fulfilled in his experience the sweet and blessed truth of the text that the "fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise."

THE END.



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